

THE CAREER OF 'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PERIOD 61-73/680-692

presented by
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ABSTRACT

'Abd-Allāh Ibn-az-Zubayr (1-73 A.H./622-692 A.D.) holds an important place in the early history of Islām, for his struggle to achieve the Caliphate illustrates the provisional and tenuous nature of political power in the young Muslim state. The conventions of Islāmic history have cast him in the rôle of an Anti-Caliph, but it has been the purpose of this present study to show that he was, in fact, possessed of an authority equal to, if not greater than, that of his Umayyad rivals, and an explanation is offered for his failure to use this advantage to secure his ambition. In the general histories of Islām, his challenge is usually presented as but an incident in the early Umayyad Caliphate, but a detailed study of the sources shows that he was, in truth, accepted as an alternative Caliph in many regions of the Islāmic world of the time and, but for a lack of political vision, might conceivably have established the succession in his own line.

All the relevant materials have been re-examined and evaluated, and an attempt has been made to establish the true historical rôle of this tragic figure. Although his venture must be regarded as having failed in its purpose, the incidents and details therein involved cast a fresh light on the political complexities of the nascent Islāmic state and serve to explain how the Umayyads were eventually to establish themselves as a universal Caliphate.

TRANSLITERATION

The system used for transliterating Arabic is that used by the Department of Arabic at Edinburgh University.

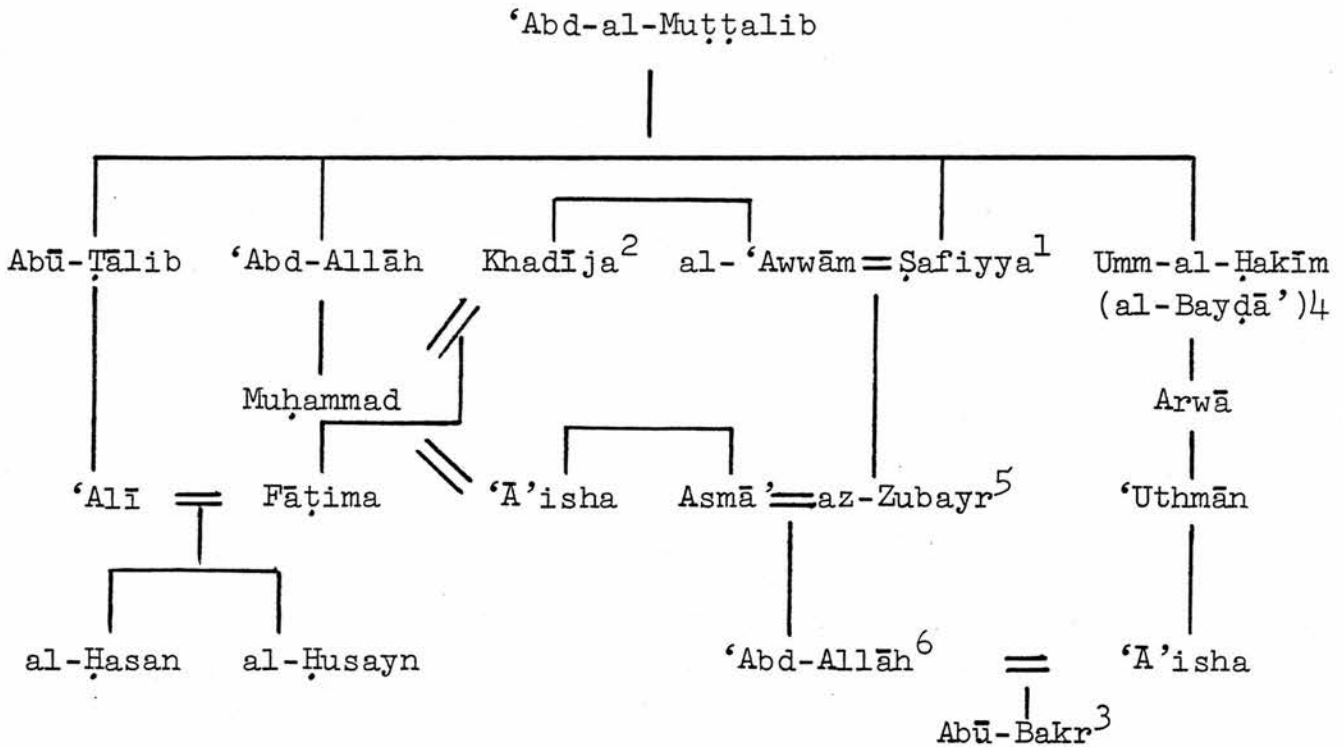
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Aghānī</u>	Al-Aṣḥfahānī, <u>Kitāb al-Aghānī</u>
<u>Aḥkāṃ</u>	Al-Māwardī, <u>Al-Aḥkāṃ aṣ-Ṣultāniyya</u>
<u>Ansāb</u>	Al-Balādhurī, <u>Ansāb al-Ashrāf</u>
<u>‘Awāṣim</u>	Ibn-al-‘Arabī, <u>Al-‘Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim</u>
<u>Azraqī</u>	Al-Azraqī, <u>Akḥbār Makka</u>
<u>Bayān</u>	Al-Jāḥiẓ, <u>Al-Bayān wa-t-Tabyīn</u>
<u>Bidāya</u>	Ibn-Kuthayyir, <u>Al-Bidāya wa-n-Nihāya</u>
<u>Ad-Dawla al-Umawiyya</u>	An-Najjār, <u>Ad-Dawla al-Umawiyya fī sh-Sharq</u>
<u>Dhahabī</u>	Adh-Dhahabī, <u>Ta’rīkh al-Islām wa-Ṭabaqāt al-Mashāhīr wa-l-A‘lām</u>
<u>Fawāt</u>	Al-Kutubī, <u>Fawāt al-Wafayāt</u>
<u>Futūḥ</u>	Al-Balādhurī, <u>Futūḥ al-Buldān</u>
<u>Futūḥ Ifrīqiya</u>	Ibn-‘Abd-al-Ḥakam, <u>Futūḥ Ifrīqiya wa-l-Andalus</u>
<u>Ibn-‘Asākir</u>	Ibn-‘Asākir, <u>At-Ta’rīkh al-Kabīr</u>
<u>Ibn-Khayyāt</u>	Ibn-Khayyāt, <u>Ta’rīkh</u>
<u>Ibn-Sa‘d</u>	Ibn-Sa‘d, <u>Kitāb aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr</u>
<u>Imāma</u>	Ibn-Qutayba, <u>Al-Imāma wa-s-Siyāsa</u>
<u>‘Iqd</u>	Ibn-‘Abd-Rabbih, <u>Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd</u>
<u>Iṣāba</u>	Ibn-Ḥajar, <u>Al-Iṣāba fī Tamyīz aṣ-Ṣaḥāba</u>
<u>Istī‘āb</u>	Ibn-‘Abd-al-Barr, <u>Kitāb al-Istī‘āb fī Ma‘rifat al-Aṣḥāb</u>

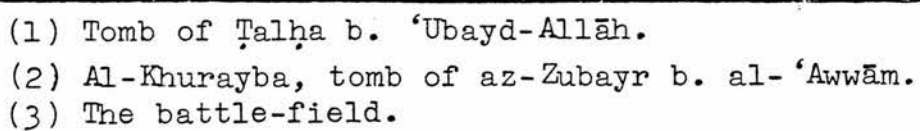
<u>Jamhara</u>	Ibn-Ḥazm, <u>Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab</u>
<u>Jawāmi‘</u>	Ibn-Ḥazm, <u>Jawāmi‘ as-Siyar</u>
<u>Kāmil</u>	Ibn-al-Athīr, <u>Al-Kāmil fī t-Ta‘rīkh</u>
<u>Kashshāf</u>	Az-Zamakhsharī, <u>Al-Kashshāf ‘an Ḥaqā‘iq</u> <u>Ghawāmiḍ at-Tanzīl</u>
<u>Maghāzī</u>	Al-Wāqidī, <u>Kitāb al-Maghāzī</u>
<u>Milal</u>	Ash-Shahrastānī, <u>Kitāb al-Milal wa-n-Niḥal</u>
<u>Muḥallā</u>	Ibn-Ḥazm, <u>Al-Muḥallā</u>
<u>Mu‘jam</u>	Al-Bakrī, <u>Mu‘jam mā Sta‘jam</u>
<u>Mukhtaṣar</u>	Amīr ‘Alī, <u>Mukhtaṣar Ta‘rīkh al-‘Arab</u>
<u>Muntaqā</u>	Al-Fākihī, <u>Kitāb al-Muntaqā fī Akhbār Umm</u> <u>al-Qurā</u>
<u>Muqaddima</u>	Ibn-Khaldūn, <u>Al-Muqaddima</u>
<u>Murūj</u>	Al-Mas‘ūdī, <u>Murūj adh-Dhahab wa-Ma‘ādin</u> <u>al-Jawhar</u>
<u>Naqt</u>	Ibn-Ḥazm, <u>Naqt al-‘Arūs</u>
<u>Nasab</u>	Ibn-Bakkār, <u>Jamharat Nasab Quraysh wa-</u> <u>Akhbārihā</u>
<u>Nizā‘</u>	Al-Maqrīzī, <u>An-Nizā‘ wa-t-Takhāṣum fī mā</u> <u>bayn Banī Umayya wa-Banī Hāshim</u>
<u>Nujūm</u>	Ibn-Taghrī-Birdī, <u>An-Nujūm az-Zāhira fī</u> <u>Mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira</u>
<u>Rasā’il</u>	Al-Jāḥiẓ, <u>Rasā’il al-Jāḥiẓ</u>
<u>Ṣaḥā’if</u>	Munajjim-Bāshī, <u>Ṣaḥā’if al-Akhbār</u>
<u>Ṣaḥīḥ</u>	Muslim, <u>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</u>
<u>Sharḥ</u>	Ibn-Abī-l-Ḥadīd, <u>Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha</u>

<u>Shifā'</u>	Al-Fāsī, <u>Shifā' al-Gharām bi-Akḥbār</u> <u>al-Balad al-Ḥarām</u>
<u>Sīra</u>	Ibn-Hishām, <u>As-Sīra an-Nabawiyya</u>
<u>Ṭabarī</u>	Aṭ-Ṭabarī, <u>Ta'rīkh ar-Rusul wa-l-Mulūk</u>
<u>Tahdhīb</u>	Ibn-Ḥajar, <u>Tahdhīb at-Tahdhīb</u>
<u>Tanbīh</u>	Al-Mas'ūdī, <u>Kitāb at-Tanbīh wa-l-Ishrāf</u>
<u>Ṭiwāl</u>	Ad-Dīnawarī, <u>Al-Akḥbār at-Ṭiwāl</u>
<u>Uṣūl</u>	Al-Baghdādī, <u>Kitāb Uṣūl ad-Dīn</u>
<u>'Uyūn</u>	Ibn-Qutayba, <u>'Uyūn al-Akḥbār</u>
Ya 'qūbī	Al-Ya 'qūbī, <u>Ta'rīkh</u>

THE GENEALOGY OF 'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR



1. Ibn-Ḥazm, Jamhara, p. 15.
2. Dīnawarī, Tiwāl, p. 264.
3. Jamhara, p. 122; Ibn-Bakkār, Nasab, p. 33; Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, p. 378.
4. Umm-al-Ḥakīm, the grandmother of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, was also known as al-Bayḍā'; see Jamhara, p. 15, where the origin of this name is explained.
5. Wāqidī, Maghāzī, I, p. 289.
6. 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr's mother was from Banū Tamīm, his grandmother from Banū Hāshim, and his father from Banū l-Asad and Banū 'Abd-al-'Uzzā, all of which were clans of the Quraysh (Nasab, p. 43).



INTRODUCTION

All historical sources can be held to be just as revealing of the age and the circumstances in which they were composed as of the events of the past which they record, the perspective of their authors being conditioned and shaped by the problems and the concerns of the society in which they were themselves living. This will be particularly true of the works on which the study of early Islāmic history must be based. All of these were composed in the 'Abbāsīd era when there was a deliberate effort on the part of the government to discredit its Umayyad predecessors; and, in addition, all of them were to some degree influenced by the sectarian and political tendencies of their period. This must not be regarded as an attempt to falsify the account of events, but rather the natural attitude of a man regarding the past as an explanation of the situation in which he finds his own society.¹

Thus, even so seemingly impartial a chronicler as at-Tabarī should be recognised as having a particular viewpoint supported by the quantity and the quality of the narrations which he includes, tending to establish a Sunnī consensus; while others, such as al-Ya'qūbī, were patently partisans and propagandists for the 'Alīd cause. It is the task of the

1. cf. Dona Straley, Perspective and Method in Early Islamic Historiography, Ph.D. thesis, Edinburgh, 1977.

modern historian to recognise the viewpoint of each of these sources and to evaluate the information they contain accordingly.

The career of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr illustrates well the variety of viewpoint held by the later historians, and the ambiguity of attitude their own predilections imposed. As a relative and contemporary of the Prophet through his aunt 'Ā'isha, he belonged indisputably to the heroic age of Islām, and deserved the respect to which this entitled him. Moreover, he was the declared and active enemy of the Umayyads, a fact that would give him particular merit in the eyes of 'Abbāsīd historians. However, he was also an opponent of 'Alī and fought against him at the Battle of the Camel, an unpardonable sin in the eyes of the later supporters of the 'Alīd factions; while his ambivalent attitude towards al-Ḥusayn was seen by them as having led to the tragedy at Karbalā'.

As will be shown, Ibn-az-Zubayr was accepted by most of these early historians as a legitimate Caliph, even if some are critical of the way in which he conducted affairs. Usually they base their accounts on a few common contemporary or near-contemporary narrators, and it is the attitude of the latter that gives their works a particular bias.

Al-Balādhurī (d. 219/834), in both the Futūḥ and the Ansāb, presents a very sober and balanced account of events, based on the works of Abū-Mikhnaf, Ibn-al-Kalbī, al-Haytham b. 'Adī, Ibn-Sa'd al-Madā'inī and Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, with oral

communications from the last two. He sometimes uses al-Wāqidī, especially for the Rāshidūn and the Umayyads.¹

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922) uses most of the same authorities, attempting to balance one against the other, but always giving preponderance to what may be described as the Sunnī or orthodox position. As his Ta'rīkh must be the central source for any study of early Islāmic history, it will be useful to enumerate his sources:

(a) 'Awāna b. al-Ḥakam b. 'Iyād b. Wazīr b. 'Abd-al-Ḥārith al-Kalbī (d. 147/764),² was a blind historian of Kufa, the author of Kitāb at-Ta'rīkh and Kitāb Sunnat Mu'āwiya. Being of Banū Kalb, he was sympathetic towards the early Umayyads, and indeed his father had served them as wālī in Khurāsān. Nevertheless, he seems to have been a supporter of the Caliph 'Uthmān, and it is he who gives the most detailed account of the events leading to his assassination.

(b) Abū-Mikhnaḥ Lūṭ b. Yaḥyā b. Sālīm al-Azdī (d. 157/774) was a Kūfī from the tribe of Azd.³ His father, Mikhnaḥ b. Sālīm, was one of the most devoted followers of 'Alī and fought alongside him at the Battle of the Camel, Ṣiffīn and an-Nahrawān. He is credited with thirty books in the Fihrist of Ibn-an-Nadīm, among them being Kitāb Ḥiṣār Makka al-Awwal, dealing with the first siege of Mecca, and Kitāb

1. Petersen, 'Alī and Mu'āwiya, p. 138.
2. Ibn-an-Nadīm, Fihrist, p. 134.
3. *ibid.*, p. 136.

Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr wa-Ḥukmih fī l-'Irāq and Kitāb Maqtal 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, describing the death of Ibn-az-Zubayr.¹ He is far from impartial in what he records, his sympathies being wholly 'Alid, and supporting the 'Irāqī version of events. Moreover, he is pre-eminently an Azdite, and eager to narrate all that contributes to the glorification of his tribe. He is critical of Ibn-az-Zubayr, holding him responsible for the death of al-Ḥusayn. Al-Ya'qūbī (d. 292/904) also draws heavily upon him for his Kitāb at-Ta'rīkh, giving the work its pronounced 'Alid bias.

(c) Contemporary with Abū-Mikhnaf was Naṣr b. Muzāḥim Abū-l-Fāḍil,² who likewise presents a Kūfī version of events, with an 'Alid interpretation. He is a source for al-Balādhurī, ad-Dīnawarī and al-Ya'qūbī, as well as at-Ṭabarī.

(d) Prominent among at-Ṭabarī's sources was Sayf b. 'Umar al-Asadī at-Tamīmī (d. 180/796), about whom little is known other than that he was the author of two important histories: Kitāb al-Futūḥ wa-r-Ridda, and Kitāb al-Jamal wa-Masīr 'A'isha-wa-'Alī. His main authority was Shu'ayb b. Ibrāhīm³ who, although representing the 'Irāqī 'school', is anti-'Alid and not very sympathetic to Ibn-az-Zubayr. He, too, glories in his tribe, but not to the same extent as does Abū-Mikhnaf. His work underlies at-Ṭabarī's version of events from the period of the Ridda wars until the assassination of 'Uthmān, and the balance and moderation of his reports have made him a valuable source for the present study.

1. *ibid.*, pp. 136-37.
2. *ibid.*, p. 137.
3. *ibid.*

(e) For the period after Sayf b. 'Umar, aṭ-Ṭabarī relied on what can be described as the generally received version of events, as represented in the works of al-Wāqidī (d. 207/822) and al-Madā'inī (d. 225/839). The latter is credited by Ibn-an-Nadīm with over three hundred books, covering the whole of Arab history from pre-Islāmic times down to the Caliphate of al-Mu'taṣim, the most important of these works being the Kitāb Akhbār al-Khulafā' al-Kabīr. Curiously, he makes no mention of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī or, what is even more surprising, of the death of al-Ḥusayn.¹ He is representative of the Medinese 'school', though sometimes presenting an 'Irāqī viewpoint as well. Both aṭ-Ṭabarī and al-Balādhurī draw on him heavily for the conquest of Syria and 'Irāq.

(f) Probably the most famous of all the early histories is that of Abū-'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Wāqidī, whose history of the conquests has survived to us. He was a native of Medina, and during the Caliphate of Hārūn ar-Rashīd he went to Baghdad where he was appointed a qāḍī. Al-Ma'mūn, also, gave him the position of qāḍī for the 'Askar al-Mahdī. Of the thirty books he is said to have written only the Kitāb al-Maghāzī is extant, but it is probable that the Ṭabaqāt of his secretary Muḥammad b. Sa'd (d. 130/747) is also due to him. In general, his work is favourable to Ibn-az-Zubayr, but above all he is a servant of the 'Abbāsids and prone to reflect a view favourable to their house. Ibn-an-Nadīm, nevertheless, makes the surprising observation that he was secretly a Shī'ite and practised dissimulation (taqiyya) in his activities.²

1. ibid., pp. 147-52.

2. ibid., p. 144.

These six authorities provide the basis for all that at-Ṭabarī relates in connection with the career of Ibn-az-Zubayr.

Ad-Dīnawarī (d. 282/895), in the al-Akḥbār at-Ṭiwāl, presents a patently 'Alid viewpoint, using as his chief source for the events with which we are concerned the history of Naṣr b. Muzāḥim. His work is of great value, but marred by a striking lack of proportion; for instance, he devotes nearly one third of his work, which contains the history of Islām down to the 3rd/9th century, to the Caliphate of 'Alī. He can be regarded as representing the 'Irāqī 'school'.

The other historical works which contain information about Ibn-az-Zubayr must be regarded as being of secondary importance. Al-Azraqī (d. 821/1418), in his Akḥbār Makka, gives details about the rebuilding of the Ka'ba by Ibn-az-Zubayr; while az-Zubayr b. Bakḥār (d. 256/869), in his only surviving work, Jamharat Nasab Quraysh wa-Akḥbārihā, includes him in his genealogies. Both these authors are representative of the Medinese 'school'.

Al-Mas'ūdī (d. 345/956), bringing what may be held as an outsider's viewpoint to the narration of these events, refers to Ibn-az-Zubayr in the Murūj adh-Dhahab and in the Tanbīh as a true Caliph, regarding the Umayyads (with the exception of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz) as merely secular rulers (mulūk). In the Kitāb al-Aghānī, al-Aṣfahānī (d. 360/970) gives information about the childhood of

Ibn-az-Zubayr which is not to be found elsewhere, as well as supplying certain details about his brother, Muṣ'ab, and his son, Ḥamza, when they represented him in 'Irāq. Similar incidental information is to be found in the Kitāb al-Istī'āb fī Ma'rifat al-Aṣḥāb of Ibn-'Abd-al-Barr (d. 463/1070); in the Anbā' Nujabā' al-Abnā' of Ibn-Zafar (d. unknown); and in the Futūḥ Ifrīqiyyā wa-l-Andalus of Ibn-'Abd-al-Ḥakam (d. 871/1466). In the al-Bidāya wa-n-Nihāya of Ibn-Kuthayyir (d. 774/1372) a full résumé of the career of Ibn-az-Zubayr is presented, all of which is drawn from the sources previously mentioned.

CHAPTER ONE

'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR'S
BACKGROUND AND PERSONALITY

The migration of Muḥammad from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D. was regarded by later generations as the starting-point of the Islāmic era, the date being established by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who succeeded Abū-Bakr as Caliph. Concerning the Hijra, aṭ-Ṭabarī says, 'Muḥammad started out on a Monday and reached the city which was known as both Yathrib and Ṭiba on the following Monday. Afterwards it was known only as Madīnat Rasūl Allāh, 'the Prophet's city'. It was to remain the capital of Islām until the early days of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, the fourth of the orthodox Caliphs.

As the Prophet died without appointing a successor, it was left to the Companions to elect one from among themselves. After negotiations, and under the guidance of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Abū-Bakr was elected the first Caliph.¹ One of the reasons offered for the selection of Abū-Bakr (aṣ-Ṣiddīq)² was the feeling among the people that the leader of their community should exhibit the qualities of wisdom and maturity in judgment, as well as being a man of repute in his society - the very attributes

1. Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, II, p. 393; III, p. 202.

2. Aṣ-Ṣiddīq, one who is truthful in word and faithful in deed. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, Book I, part four, p. 1668.

looked for in the tribal shaykh. Indeed, such was the only precedent available to the Muslims in these early days, and it was personal qualities rather than legitimacy of claim that influenced the minds of men. The fact that Abū-Bakr was of the same age as the Prophet and a lifelong friend who gave his own daughter in marriage to him must also have been of influence in this election. Though there is dispute as to whether Abū-Bakr was the first male Muslim, it is generally accepted that he was the first to believe in Muḥammad's Night Journey.¹ Such qualifications outweighed the claims that might have been advanced by the supporters of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib who, although the son-in-law of the Prophet, was still too young to command general respect. Under Abū-Bakr the administration was guided by the Qur'ān and those precedents set by the Prophet, and it implied military responsibility in addition to the political and religious administration.

To avoid the confusion attending his own election, Abū-Bakr, on his deathbed, appointed 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb as his successor, ordering 'Uthmān b. 'Affān to write his testament ('ahd). The significant passage reads:

'....that I appointed 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb as Caliph....'²

According to Ibn-Khaldūn, this 'ahd was a compact involving two parties: the one declaring his fitness and willingness

1. Ibn-Hishām, Sīra, I, p. 246.

2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, p. 126, is the earliest source to contain the text of this testament; Jāḥiẓ, Bayān, II, p. 34.

to accept the responsibilities of the Caliphate, and the other (the community) acknowledging the justice of his claim.¹ This acknowledgment was expressed in an oath of allegiance (bay'a), violation of which the Qur'ān threatened would be punished by God and would deny entry into Paradise.² 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, whose laqab was al-Fārūq (one who distinguishes between truth and falsehood), was also the Prophet's father-in-law through his daughter Ḥafṣa. He was, in addition, known as al-'Ādil ('the just').³ At the time of his assassination by a Persian freed slave called Abū-Lu'lu'a in 23 A.H., while on his deathbed he appointed a six-man committee, majlis ash-shūrā, to choose one from among themselves to be his successor. These six men were members of the group known as al-'ashara al-mubashshara, the ten Companions of the Prophet who were the first believers and trustworthy in their knowledge of the Qur'ān and the sunna. To them the Prophet had promised Paradise.

Although 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb had been asked by his Companions to appoint someone as his successor, he declined, saying, 'If I appoint a successor then a better person than I has already appointed a successor (i.e. Abū-Bakr), and if I leave (the matter) then a better person than I has already left it (i.e. Muḥammad).' The six members of the shūrā were: Talḥa b. 'Ubayd-Allāh, who was called by the Prophet Talḥat al-Khayr, partly because of his outstanding action at

1. Ibn-Khaldūn, Muqaddima, p. 166.

2. Qur'ān, 10:48.

3. Ibn-Ḥazm, Naqṭ, p. 149.

the Battle of Uhūd, when he protected the Prophet;¹ az-Zubayr b. al-‘Awwām, the Prophet's cousin, known as Ḥawārī Rasūl Allāh; ‘Alī b. Abī-Ṭalīb, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law; ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, also the Prophet's cousin (on his mother's side) and his son-in-law; Sa‘d b. Abī-Waqqāṣ, and ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf, both of whom came from the same clan as the Prophet's mother. ‘Umar ordered his son ‘Abd-Allāh to act as witness, and arranged that he was to have a casting vote in certain circumstances. He ordered that the matter should be discussed for no more than three days so that the umma be not left longer without a Caliph. After these days had passed, his son was to be on the same side as ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān and Sa‘d b. Abī-Waqqāṣ in the deciding vote. Accordingly, after the death of ‘Umar the shūrā discussed the matter inconclusively for three days, until on the night of the third day ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf who, as the oldest member, was acting as chairman, sought to resolve the impasse by renouncing his own claim and suggesting that az-Zubayr, Ṭalḥa and Sa‘d do the same, leaving the contest between ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.² Each of the latter agreed that if his own claim did not exist the other should be appointed Caliph, which brought the problem no nearer to a solution. ‘Abd-ar-Raḥmān then

1. Ibn-‘Abd-al-Barr, Istī‘āb, II, p. 765.
2. Apparently, none of these four thought his support strong enough to encourage the pressing of his own claim, and their acceptance of this proposal was an acknowledgment of the political realities in Medina.

sought the views of people outside the shūrā and found that they were equally divided between the two candidates. Finally, he demanded from 'Alī a vow that, if elected, he would act in accordance with the Qur'ān, the sunna and precedents (nahj) of the two shaykhs (i.e. Abū-Bakr and 'Umar). All 'Alī would commit himself to was acting to the best of his ability in given circumstances, whereas 'Uthmān agreed without reservation to all these conditions. This decided 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān in favour of the latter, and the appointment of 'Uthmān was proclaimed, the people coming to the mosque to pay homage to him as their new Caliph.¹

There is in aṭ-Ṭabarī² another account of the affair in which 'Alī is said to have been misled by 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ as to the attitude of 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān on the question of observing the precedents ('azīma) of the first two Caliphs, saying that he was actually in favour of individual judgment (ijtihād). Afterwards, he suggested the opposite to 'Uthmān; and, as this was actually the true position of 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān on the matter, his vote in the shūrā was cast accordingly. When 'Alī realised that he had been deceived, he denounced 'Amr's behaviour as cheating (khud'a).³ The story is obviously contrived in the light of subsequent developments, for, in fact, 'Uthmān showed no particular favour to 'Amr after his succession; indeed,

1. Concerning the shūrā, see Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 227-41.
2. *ibid.*, pp. 238-39.
3. *ibid.*

one of his first acts was to remove him from the governorship of Egypt.¹

On the other hand, al-Ya'qūbī² states that 'Uthmān's succession had already been arranged by 'Umar who, while on his deathbed, had ordered his son, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, to sit as an observer in the shūrā and, in case of a tie, to favour with his casting vote that party which included 'Abd-ar-Rahmān. The explanation is given that the latter was on very friendly terms with both Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ and 'Uthmān, all being related on their mother's side.³ Nevertheless, the overriding factor must certainly have been the difference in age between the two contenders, for Arab tradition would dictate that preference be given to the older man.

The oath of allegiance (bay'a), once given, was inviolate and could not be retracted, allowing the Caliph complete discretion in the administration of the affairs of the Muslims, who were obliged to obey him in all things. On this, there was a specific Qur'ānic injunction:

'Lo! Those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muḥammad) swear allegiance only unto Allah. The Hand of Allah is above their hands. So whosoever breaketh his oath, breaketh it only to his soul's hurt; while whosoever keepeth his covenant with Allah, on him will He bestow immense reward.⁴

1. Ṭiwāl, p. 139.
2. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 116.
3. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 228-29.
4. Qur'ān, 10:48.

'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib's subsequent revolt against 'Uthmān is therefore held to have infringed this duty.

The position of az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām in the shūrā shows him to have been influenced by 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān and, probably, one of the first supporters of the claim of 'Uthmān. In aṭ-Ṭabarī¹ we find him urging the shūrā not to be indecisive at such a critical time for the Muslim community. 'Every true Muslim, except those meant to err and be miserable, should follow your wise advice. All should heed your call to the right path, adhering to the sunna.'

Az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām, along with 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf, Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ and Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubayd-Allāh, was among the first of those who accepted Islām and who followed Abū-Bakr, having already been promised Paradise by the Prophet because of their acceptance of his message.² Ardent in the cause of the faith, they regulated their affairs strictly in accordance with the teachings of Muḥammad and the Qur'ān. After az-Zubayr had returned from Abyssinia, whither he had fled with the other refugees, he showed himself to be one of the most resolute opponents of the Quraysh, playing a prominent part in the battles of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq, and participating in the conquest of Mecca.³ After the death of the Prophet,

1. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 235-36.

2. Maghāzī, I, p. 364.

3. *ibid.*, p. 154.

he was anxious to maintain harmony within the umma, declaring that he would rather die than witness fitna among the Muslims.

Az-Zubayr's wife was Asmā', the daughter of Abū-Bakr and the sister of the Prophet's wife, 'Ā'isha.¹ Asmā' is said to have enjoyed special esteem in the early community because it was she who brought food each day to the Prophet and her father when they were in hiding in the cave of Hīrā'. The Prophet called her Dhāt an-Niṭāqayn ('she of the two girdles'), having promised that she would have these in Paradise in return for the one she gave him.² She bore az-Zubayr several sons and daughters, the eldest child being 'Abd-Allāh who was to become Caliph.³ His brother 'Urwa was a man of ascetic life and regarded as one of the leading scholars of his time. 'Urwa was reared by 'Ā'isha, from whom he reported certain traditions.

The other children of az-Zubayr from this union were the sons 'Āṣim and Mundhir (who were to die with their brother 'Abd-Allāh in the battle of Mecca), and al-Muhājir; and the daughters Khadīja al-Kubrā, Umm-al-Ḥasan and 'Ā'isha. Another wife of az-Zubayr was ar-Ribāb bint Anīf b. Kalb, the mother of Muṣ'ab (who figures prominently in his half-brother's Caliphate)⁴ and Ḥamza. From a third wife

1. Istī'āb, II, p. 616.

2. Ṭabarī, II, p. 379.

3. Jamhara, p. 122.

4. Nasab, p. 242.

he had a daughter, Ramla, and from a fourth, Umm-Khālīd bint Khālīd b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, a son, 'Amr.¹ This latter was to die while being held prisoner by his brother 'Abd-Allāh because of his sympathies with Banū Umayya.

'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām b. Khuwaylid b. Asad b. Quṣayy al-Qurashī al-Asadī had for grandmother on his father's side Ṣafiyya bint 'Abd-al-Muṭṭalib, whose husband, al-'Awwām, was the brother of Khadīja, the Prophet's first wife.² Khadīja, in turn, was the mother of Fāṭima, the wife of 'Alī, by whom she had the sons al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.

He was probably born in Medina a few months after the Hijra, and many of the sources claim him to be the first child born into Islām after this event. In fact, however, his was the first birth among the muhajirūn; among the anṣār, the first child to be born was an-Nu'mān b. Bashīr,³ who later served briefly as wālī of Ḥimṣ for Ibn-az-Zubayr. In aṭ-Ṭabarī the date of his birth is given as 1 A.H., while other sources mention 2 A.H.⁴ Another report in aṭ-Ṭabarī on the authority of al-Wāqidī is more specific in saying that his mother was already pregnant when she emigrated, and gave birth to the child in Medina twenty months after the Hijra.

1. Jamhara, p. 122.
2. Ibn-Ḥajar, Tahdhīb, V, p. 213; Kutubī, Fawāt, I, p. 445.
3. Nasab, p. 364.
4. Ṭabarī, II, pp. 400-1; the date 2 A.H. is given in Fawāt, *ibid.*, p. 449, Istī'āb, II, p. 576.

The birth was greeted joyfully by the Muslim community, for they had been told that the Jews had put a spell on them whereby they would have no male children born among them. The Prophet himself blessed the newborn infant, and asked the Muslims to offer up prayers of gratitude¹ - in contrast to the way the news of his death in 73 A.H. was received in Syria, where the people regarded it as a blessing from God, chanting Allāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar in the mosques.²

Ibn-az-Zubayr had ten brothers and nine sisters, but it is unlikely that he lived among them, for he was reared in the house of the Prophet where he enjoyed the special affection of his aunt 'A'isha; her affection, indeed, being such that she was called Umm 'Abd-Allāh by her husband. When he was eight years old he paid homage to the Prophet, along with the other sons of the Companions, and tradition has it that it was he who was the first of them to enter Muḥammad's house at this time to make this declaration, which should not be surprising since he had lived there since infancy.

The same tradition contains other incidents from his childhood which seek to presage his future greatness. One day, when he was playing with his friends, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb passed by, and all the children ran away except Ibn-az-Zubayr. 'Umar asked him why he did not run with

1. Ṭabarī, II, pp. 400-1.

2. Fawāt, I, p. 446.

them. He answered, 'I have done nothing wrong that I should be frightened of you, and the road is wide enough for both of us.'¹

His position among the Muslims was assured from birth, not only because he was from a prominent family but also because he enjoyed the deep affection of 'A'isha. It was he whom she was to nominate as executor (waṣī) of her will at the time of her death in 58 A.H.,² as did also 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Āmir b. Karīz b. Rabī'a b. Ḥabīb b. 'Abd-Shams, and his father az-Zubayr.³ His intimate contact with the Prophet naturally gave a particular authenticity to the traditions related by him, thirty of which he is said to have memorised while still a child. His opinions on the Qur'ān, too, were highly respected, and he was a member of the commission appointed by 'Uthmān to collect an authorised text, the others being Zayd b. Thābit, Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ and 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Hishām. He is likewise credited with being one of the earliest exegetes (mufasssirūn).⁴

1. Ibn-Ḥajar, Iṣāba, IV, p. 70.
2. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 226.
3. Ibn-'Asākir, Ta'rīkh, VII, pp. 398-400.
4. Ibn-Ḥazm, Jawāmi', p. 281; Zamakhsharī, Kashshāf, II, pp. 88, 201; Qaysī, Ta'rīkh at-Tafsīr, p. 51.

As recorded by later historians, his personality contained all those qualities which might be expected in a leader of his people; he was pious, eloquent and brave, seeking nothing of this world for himself and devoting his time to praying in the mosque in the manner he had learned from Abū-Bakr, who in turn had learned it from the Prophet. When the news of his death reached his mother, she is said to have remarked, 'He was a man who fasted continuously, who prayed day and night, and who treated his family kindly.' Ibn-ʿAbbās, too, admitted that 'when he stood up to pray he was like a column, and in prostration like a garment cast on the ground.'¹

His talents as an orator are also dwelt upon in the later histories, mention being made of the correctness of his language and the effectiveness of his delivery. On one occasion when he spoke in the presence of the Caliph ʿUthmān, his father, az-Zubayr, exclaimed, 'By God, it was Abū-Bakr I heard speaking through your mouth.'² Ibn-Qutayba quotes approvingly Ibn-az-Zubayr's principle, 'Let him who does not see with the mind as well as the eyes know no happiness!'³ Al-Jāḥiẓ regards him as one of the five greatest orators in Islām, and remarks that only the envious would deny that his style was inimitable. Al-Muhallab b. Abī-Ṣufra, the leader of the army in ʿIrāq, is reputed to

1. Ibn-Kuthayyir, Bidāya, VIII, pp. 334-35.

2. Ibn-ʿAbd-al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ Ifrīqiya, p. 50.

3. Ibn-Qutayba, ʿUyūn, I, p. 34.

have said, 'Ibn-az-Zubayr possesses the manṭiq al-‘Arab', which here must certainly mean 'eloquence'.¹

As regards religion, he is presented as being independent in judgment, capable of expressing his position forcibly, with clarity and commonsense. He was unswerving in his adherence to the Islām of the Prophet. His political enemies, however, accused him of being greedy, envious and ill-natured, and blamed him for having Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya expelled from Mecca to Medina and for exiling ‘Abd-Allāh b. al-‘Abbās to aṭ-Ṭā’if.²

His bravery, too, is attested in the sources by such quotations as that attributed to Ṭāriq, the former mawlā of ‘Uthmān who was governor (wālī) of Medina at the time Ibn-az-Zubayr met his death in the second siege of Mecca: 'A more manly son was never born to woman.' Al-Ḥajjāj was annoyed by this praise of his enemy, and reproved Ṭāriq; but the latter defended his judgment by pointing out that Ibn-az-Zubayr had held out against him for months even though he had few weapons of war. When ‘Abd-al-Malik heard of this conversation, he agreed with Ṭāriq that Ibn-az-Zubayr had amply demonstrated his courage. Although he was seventy-three years old, he still wielded the sword which he had used as a young man against his Umayyad enemies.³

1. Bayān, I, p. 251; Bidāya, VIII, pp. 334-35.
2. Ya‘qūbī, III, p. 9..
3. Ṭabarī, V, p. 33; Ibn-al-Athīr, Kāmil, IV, pp. 137-38.

A political conservative, he remained unchanged in his views despite the enormous developments Islām had undergone in his lifetime, and this left him at a disadvantage in his struggles with Mu‘āwiya, who was certainly one of the most astute and subtle minds of the period. In fact, Ibn-az-Zubayr's vision rarely passed the horizons of Mecca and Medina, all the other territories which had been conquered being regarded merely as extensions of this heartland; and in this he felt that he was following the example set by ‘Umar.

He had numerous children by several wives, the oldest being Abū-Bakr, born of ‘Ā’isha bint ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān. There is also mention of a son called Khubayb as his first-born, but this is disputed by the best authorities. By another wife, Quḥṭum bint Mundhir b. Zubbān al-Firāziyya, he had a son named Ḥamza, who was to be the ‘āmil of Basra during the period when his father was Caliph. When Quḥṭum died, he married her sister, Tumāḍir, who presented him with three sons: Mundhir, Thābit and ‘Abbād. By another wife, Rīṭa bint ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hāshim, he also had a son; and after her death he married her sister. His sons Mūsā and ‘Umar were born to a sixth wife, Hunṭuma; and his last wife, Nafīsa bint al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, gave birth to a son after he had died and named him ‘Abd-Allāh.¹

Ibn-az-Zubayr had participated in the battles of the Muslims from an early age, even being present at Yarmuk in

1. Nasab, p. 242.

15 A.H.¹ His father, like many others of the Companions, wanted his son to become a capable soldier; and we are told that even when such boys were too young to participate in an engagement they were present as spectators so that they might learn from the example of others. After the victory at Yarmuk, he listened to the speech given by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb at al-Jābiya, near Damascus; and in 20 A.H.² he witnessed the peace concluded by his father, az-Zubayr, with the people of Egypt. His first conspicuous achievement as a warrior came in the North African campaign of 27 A.H.,³ the success of which is largely attributed to his bravery and resourcefulness. In 49 A.H. he was one of the Companions' sons in the army led against Constantinople by Yazīd, whom Mu'āwiya wished to prepare for leadership by giving him experience of a major campaign.⁴

Inadequate though our information may be, and not always reliable, it remains indisputable that Ibn-az-Zubayr was among the true founders of the Islāmic community as it developed in Medina and, moreover, as he was the oldest surviving Companion of the Prophet, gave a line of continuity to the rapid developments it was undergoing in its new environment. He personifies the patriarchal figure of early

1. Ṭabarī, III, p. 571; IV, p. 109.
2. *ibid.*, IV, p. 109.
3. Futūḥ Ifrīqiya, p. 54.
4. Ṭabarī, V, p. 232.

Islām - a thin man of medium height, with the marks of constant prayer lining his forehead, known affectionately to his friends as the Dove of the Mosque (ḥamāmat al-masjid).¹

1. Fawāt, I, p. 447.

CHAPTER TWO

THE AIMS OF 'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR

I. The Assassination of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān
and the Attitude of Ibn-az-Zubayr

'Uthmān was greatly respected by the Companions, and having married two daughters of the Prophet - Ruqayya and Umm-Kulthūm - he was known as Dhū-n-Nūrayn ('having two lights'). He was the father-in-law of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, in whom he placed great confidence, enjoining the people to render obedience to him.¹

Along with Ḥasan b. 'Alī, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa and Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, Ibn-az-Zubayr defended the besieged Caliph and was an eye-witness to his violent death. There were only one hundred who stood with 'Uthmān against the rebels. Ibn-az-Zubayr asked 'Uthmān for permission to fight against them, but was not allowed to do so. Then he tried his best to persuade the Caliph to move to Mecca, as the latter could be better defended, but he refused again and said, 'God has forbidden fighting in the Ḥaram, and I would not like any precedent for this to be due to me. The Prophet has given me a responsibility, and I will adhere to it.' When the state of siege became severe, 'Uthmān called Ibn-az-Zubayr and gave him a testament (waṣīyya) to take to his father, az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām. The contents

1. Naqṭ, p. 149; Ṭabarī, IV, p. 420; Ansāb, IVB, p. 73.

of this waṣīyya are unknown, but some authorities claim that it appointed az-Zubayr successor to 'Uthmān as Caliph, others that it appointed Ibn-az-Zubayr, while others say that it concerned the disposal of his property and other family matters. Whatever the truth of the matter, it is certain that Ibn-az-Zubayr's being entrusted with this mission had a profound psychological effect upon him. He was the last person to leave the Caliph, and continued in his attempts to persuade people to help 'Uthmān until the latter was killed. According to aṭ-Ṭabarī, there were not more than five hundred rebels, while Ibn-Qutayba reports their number as being about one thousand.¹ The siege lasted for forty days until, on the 18 Dhū l-Ḥijja, 35 A.H., the Caliph was slain.²

'Uthmān was left unburied for twenty-four hours because of his followers' fear of the rebels; so Ibn-az-Zubayr asked Ḥakīm b. Ḥizām, Jubayr b. Muṭ'im, Niyār b. Mukarram and Abū-Jahm b. Ḥudhayfa to help him to bury him under cover of darkness in Ḥushsh Kawkab, the burial-place for Jews in Medina.³ This also was done out of fear of the rebels. During the Umayyad period he was removed to al-Baqī', the burial-place for Muslims. This ignominious incident affected Ibn-az-Zubayr deeply, and he continued to speak of it until his death.

1. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 378-92; Ibn-Qutayba, Imāma, I, pp. 38-40.
2. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 165.
3. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 413.

II. The Battle of the Camel

(a) The Course of the Battle

Ibn-az-Zubayr played a very important part too in encouraging his aunt 'Ā'isha to take part in the Battle of the Camel, in which she commanded great respect among the whole body of Muslims as she was Umm-al-Mu'minīn (a title given to wives of the Prophet) and the most beloved wife of the Prophet. The expedition was ostensibly undertaken in order to take revenge for 'Uthmān against the regicides. Although there was a Qur'ānic prohibition against wives of the Prophet even leaving their homes, the new situation demanded that she adopt a positive attitude towards one or another of the parties in contention.¹ 'Ā'isha and Ṭalḥa, in fact, had both been very critical of 'Uthmān during the last six years of his Caliphate.² It is clear from the fact that she did not try to dissuade the rebels that she was unwilling to help him even if she could have done so. In fact, while the siege was going on she went to Mecca for the 'umra (minor pilgrimage) and was there when he was killed, only hearing of the murder when she was returning to Medina. A person from Banū Kalb told her that the people of Medina had decided to accept 'Alī as Caliph and

1. Qur'ān, 33:33.

2. Ṭabarī, IV, p. 449. Ṭalḥa was her cousin and would have been the most suitable husband for her if she had been free to remarry. Later, he became her brother-in-law.

pay homage to him. According to aṭ-Ṭabarī, she turned her camel back and returned to Mecca in sorrow, saying aloud, 'I must challenge those who killed him. By God, 'Uthmān was slain unjustly, and we should all try to take revenge upon his murderers.' Probably she had her own plans, and was only waiting for the right moment to put them into operation. Another report in aṭ-Ṭabarī states that she would have preferred Ṭalḥa to be 'Uthmān's successor because she believed him to be most likely to follow the course taken by Abū-Bakr, her father.¹ Her unwillingness to accept 'Alī as Caliph is attributed to the well-known misunderstanding between them.²

In spite of 'Alī's suspicions, Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr succeeded in getting permission from him for the hajj. 'Alī told them that he was aware of their true intentions, but nevertheless he let them go. On arriving in Mecca, they started conspiring with 'Ā'isha. They decided to go to Basra with the financial help of Ya'lā b. Umayya, who agreed with the plan because he had been 'āmil of the Yemen for 'Uthmān.

There were good reasons to stop her from riding out; the first and the most important was the Qur'ānic injunction forbidding wives of the Prophet to leave the home, not to speak of going to a battle-field in this way. Aṭ-Ṭabarī

1. Ṭabarī, III, pp. 453-59.

2. Concerning the event of the ifk, see *ibid.*, II, pp. 610-19; Sīra, II, pp. 203-7.

reports that it was Ibn-az-Zubayr who influenced her to adopt this course of action. His influence on her was stronger than that of anybody else. However, he did not inform her about anything, even though he prepared her itinerary.¹ Secondly, she received a letter from Umm-Salama (one of the Prophet's wives) regarding the matter. She explained to her the impropriety of going to the battle-field, and tried to make her realise her position as a wife of the Prophet.² Thirdly, the attitude of 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar provided an example, for he stopped his sister Ḥafṣa (another wife of the Prophet) from participating in this activity with 'Ā'isha. Ḥafṣa, in the beginning, had agreed to go with her, but when she heard about her going as far as Basra she refused to participate. Presumably 'Ā'isha was aware of all this but circumstances compelled her to act as she did. Lastly, she was aware of the fact that all the money for this expedition was provided by Ya'lā b. Umayya, and also of what people would say about her going to the battle-field with the help of this man's money. In view of all these reasons she might well have hesitated, but there was a very strong character directing affairs: Ibn-az-Zubayr. While they were preparing themselves to go out of Mecca, she delivered her farewell speech in such a voice that all who heard were weeping and crying. Many

1. Tabarī, IV, pp. 446-52.
2. See the letters between 'Ā'isha and Umm-Salama in Ibn-'Abd-Rabbih, 'Iqd, II, pp. 316-17.

thousands of grief-stricken people cried and cried as though they would never stop.

On her departure from the city most of the Meccans accompanied her up to Wādī Dhī 'Irq, a place a few miles distant on the road to Basra. People were weeping and crying so much that the event was referred to in later histories as The Day of Weeping (naḥīb). Az-Zubayr asked some of his sons to accompany him, leaving others behind. Ibn-az-Zubayr angrily asked his father why he was taking him and his brothers on the campaign while leaving his sons from other wives behind, saying that he did not wish only his mother to be bereaved.¹ When they left Wādī Dhī 'Irq, Marwān b. al-Ḥakam came and asked az-Zubayr and Ṭalḥa which one of them should be amīr and imām (that is, the leader of the expedition and the leader of the Muslims in prayer). 'Ā'isha, hearing this, became angry and said, 'Do not divide the people; woe to you, O Marwān. Would it not be suitable that my nephew (i.e. Ibn-az-Zubayr) led them in prayer?'²

According to al-Ya'qūbī, however, when Marwān was wondering which of them should be called amīr and imām, Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa would have liked his father to be imām and Ibn-az-Zubayr would have preferred his father. Al-Ya'qūbī says it is probable that 'Ā'isha answered him in

1. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 451-537.

2. *ibid.*, p. 455.

strong words, saying that 'Abd-Allāh and Muḥammad should guide the prayer on alternate days.¹ There is a story that, as they continued moving towards Basra, the expedition stopped to rest at a certain place and barking was heard. She enquired about the name of the place, and was told that it was the Water of al-Ḥaw'ab. She decided to return to Mecca and said, 'I have heard the Prophet asking his wives who is the one who will hear the barking of al-Ḥaw'ab. So I would not like to be that one.'² Al-Ya'qūbī narrates the story in the following words: One day the Prophet told her not to be that woman who will hear the barking of al-Ḥaw'ab.³

They stopped there for a day and a night to persuade her to continue the journey, but she was not satisfied until Ibn-az-Zubayr cried, 'Help, help, here are 'Alī's forces.'⁴ According to another source, Ibn-az-Zubayr swore to her falsely that it was not al-Ḥaw'ab.⁵ The story cannot be accepted; in fact, no genuine tradition spoke about al-Ḥaw'ab, likewise no place of that name is mentioned by any geographer, or exists in any collections except those of the Shī'a. Because of this some scholars have denied the authenticity of this tradition. They assume that it

1. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 170.

2. Ṭabarī, IV, p. 469.

3. Ya'qūbī, *ibid.*

4. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 476.

5. Iṣāba, IV, p. 678.

was fabricated to exaggerate the situation and defame Ibn-az-Zubayr by presenting him as a liar and unreliable, and assert that it was spread by Shī'ites.¹ This, of course, is because 'Ā'isha's position was hostile to 'Alī.²

At last they arrived at Basra and camped at a place called al-Khurayba, where they captured the 'āmil appointed by 'Alī, 'Uthmān b. Ḥanīf. 'Ā'isha made a moving speech as a result of which the vast majority in Basra sided with her, and most of the regicides there were killed. Anarchy reigned in Basra while the ineffective negotiations were going on. Ibn-az-Zubayr seized the treasury and food stores and refused to distribute anything, making 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Abī-Bakr (full brother to 'Ā'isha) 'āmil of Basra. He declared that nobody would be given food unless he refused to take an oath of allegiance to 'Alī or promised to kill him.³

After the death of the Prophet, the problem of succession had arisen and the Companions had a difference of opinion on this issue. Az-Zubayr was among those who thought that 'Alī should be the first Caliph.⁴ However, when Abū-Bakr was elected, everybody, including 'Alī, co-operated with him and did not raise any difficulty.

1. Ibn-al-'Arabī, 'Awāṣim, II, p. 136.

2. Ṭabarī, II, pp. 610-19.

3. *ibid.*, pp. 474-75.

4. Imāma, II, p. 11.

Everything went well until the death of the second Caliph, because Abū-Bakr and 'Umar worked according to the Qur'ān and the sunna and always kept in mind the welfare of the Muslim community. It was 'Uthmān's succession which created frustrations for the supporters of 'Alī. The Umayyads started organising themselves in the period of 'Uthmān's rule and their motives became very clear after the Caliph 'Uthmān was assassinated. The situation at the time was that the people of Medina accepted 'Alī as Caliph but the people of Syria, 'Irāq and even Mecca had not given their verdict on the matter. As far as Kūfa was concerned, the people were strong supporters of 'Alī.

Abū-Mūsa al-Ash'arī, then wālī of Kufa, made a speech on this occasion in which he dwelt on the contribution which the Companions had made to the cause of Islām.¹ He advised the people to remain peaceful and not to fight each other. It is stated by aṭ-Ṭabarī that even the people of Medina did not all agree upon his Caliphate. ^(i.e. Ash'arī) Some Companions were away from Medina and some afterwards left the city to avoid entering into controversy. For instance, Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ not only refused to pay homage to 'Alī but also left Medina. Muḡhīra b. Abī-Shu'ba and Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ dissociated themselves from the dispute, particularly when 'Alī and 'A'isha were facing one another on the battle-field.

On reaching Basra, 'Alī tried to negotiate with the other party in order to reach a settlement without fighting. 'A'isha was also in favour of a peaceful solution. However, although the parties had been involved in occasional

1. . Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 483-84.

fighting before 'Alī's arrival at Basra, the situation was made much worse when Ibn-az-Zubayr imprisoned 'Uthmān b. Ḥanīf, wālī of Basra, and deprived his followers of food and allowances. Aṭ-Ṭabarī reports the unyielding attitude of Ibn-az-Zubayr in the following words: 'On the last day of Rabī' ath-Thānī, 36 A.H., Ḥakīm b. Jubayr came to Ibn-az-Zubayr and asked him to restore the supply of food to the people of Basra and free the wālī. Ibn-az-Zubayr refused to accept unless they rejected 'Alī's Caliphate or killed him.'¹

(b) The Attitude of Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr

Aṭ-Ṭabarī reports that, before the battle started, someone saw Ṭalḥa in a state of utter sorrow and grief, and enquired the reason. What Ṭalḥa said in reply is very significant and throws light on the situation: 'There was a time when we were united like one body against our enemy, but, unfortunately, now we are fighting each other.'

At the same time az-Zubayr was heard to say, 'By Allah, I see it to be fitna.' Someone asked him, 'If it is fitna, then why do you remain in order to fight?' Az-Zubayr replied, 'Until now I have never undertaken anything without knowing what I was doing. I do not know whether I am standing on my head or my feet.'² Then, when the armies were facing each other, 'Alī called az-Zubayr and Ṭalḥa and

1. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 452-84.

2. *ibid.*, p. 476.

talked to them face to face. He reminded them of the relationship which they had and their association as Companions of the Prophet, and the great struggle for the establishment of Islām under the guidance of Muḥammad. He asked them to keep in mind the Qur'ān and the sunna¹ and not to deviate from the right path.² Both of them thought over their attitude and tried to avoid a clash. Az-Zubayr left the battle and was on his way to Mecca when he was killed treacherously. Ṭalḥa was also trying to remain aloof from the battle when he was shot by Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and later died due to loss of blood.³ He was the first one killed in the battle.⁴

This event has been described differently by the historians. For instance, al-Ya'qūbī says that, when the battle started, 'Alī went to the front line and called az-Zubayr and Ṭalḥa. When they came face to face with him, he reminded az-Zubayr of the saying of the Prophet, 'You will be fighting with 'Alī and you will be unjust.' Az-Zubayr, frightened, asked his son 'Abd-Allāh to stop fighting and left the battle. We do not know the real intention of az-Zubayr, but it is clear that he left the battle-field and tried to persuade his son to stop fighting.

1. Bayān, III, pp. 143-44.
2. Tiwāl, p. 140.
3. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 528-35.
4. Istī'āb, II, p. 768.

The latter, who refused to accept his suggestion, replied to his father that he would try his best until God decided the outcome.¹

Al-Ya'qūbī gives some idea of the motives behind Ibn-az-Zubayr's reply when he says, 'The flag was kept high by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya and 'Ammār b. Yāsir. Perhaps he thought that his father was frightened of Muḥammad.'² It is clear from the above-mentioned reports that az-Zubayr did not leave the battle-field because he was afraid of death, but because he realised the gravity of the situation. He remembered the tradition of the Prophet and he disliked the killing of Muslims without any justification. After the death of Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr, fierce fighting started, during which Ibn-az-Zubayr was holding the halter of 'Ā'isha's camel. The people of Basra fought courageously in front of the camel, taking Ibn-az-Zubayr as their leader.³ Many people, including Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa, were killed. Ibn-az-Zubayr was wounded and taken to the trench, where other wounded men were lying, by al-Ashtar, one of 'Alī's soldiers.⁴

'Ā'isha was very worried about the situation, particularly when she learned of the death of Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa. When 'Alī saw that the battle was not going to end while

1. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 508-9; Ṭiwāl, p. 148.

2. Ya'qūbī, II, pp. 170-71.

3. Ṭiwāl, p. 149.

4. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, pp. 525-37; Iṣāba, II, p. 311.

the camel was there, he ordered it to be hamstrung and asked Muḥammad b. Abī-Bakr to take care of his sister.¹ The fighting stopped after the camel was killed, thousands of Muslims having died in the battle. 'A'isha asked her brother Muḥammad to bring Ibn-az-Zubayr before her. Although they were rivals and Ibn-az-Zubayr held Muḥammad b. Abī-Bakr responsible for the murder of 'Uthmān, the latter, with 'Alī's permission, brought Ibn-az-Zubayr before 'A'isha.

(c) The Responsibility for the Battle

This was the first battle in which more than a thousand Muslims from both sides were killed.² The question of responsibility for it was much debated in Islāmic history and is still a point of dispute among the sectarian writers. Certain scholars have tried to avoid commenting on this in any way, for they respected Islām and the Companions of the Prophet and thought it improper to say anything against them, particularly against individuals such as 'Alī, Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr who were from al-'ashara al-mubashshara to whom the Prophet promised Paradise. Of Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr in particular the Prophet is reported to have said, 'Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr are my neighbours in Paradise.'³ Their reason,

1. 'Alī was Muḥammad's stepfather. Abū-Bakr died when he was two years old, and also when he was two years old his mother married 'Alī.
2. Ṭabarī, IV, pp. 537-39.
3. Baghdādī, Uṣūl, p. 290.

therefore, in adopting this attitude was, firstly, that the participants on both sides belonged to the first generation of Islām. The majority of them were Companions of the Prophet and some of them were the most respected leaders, whom they would not wish to charge with responsibility for this bloody event. Secondly, most Muslim leaders tried to cultivate this kind of attitude. To the Sunnites, for instance, all the Companions of the Prophet are 'udūl (trustworthy), and if their reliability is to be questioned the whole structure of religious thought would be weakened.¹ However, it must be said that avoiding discussion and the determination of responsibility is not a sound attitude towards historical fact. No doubt it involves religious feelings, but for a student of history it is absolutely necessary to make an objective observation and assessment of the situation. When the event is discussed and attempts are made to apportion blame, we can detect other interests at work. An example of a biased sectarian view would be that of the Mu'tazilite leaders, such as Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', 'Amr b. 'Ubayd and Abū-l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf, who expressed their opinion in a guarded way. They declared that one party, definitely, was wrong but which one they did not specify.²

1. Uṣūl, p. 291.

2. Shahrastānī, Milal, pp. 33-34.

As for the Shī'ites, they, without any hesitation, condemned 'Ā'isha, Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr. This is natural, as they supported 'Alī above all. The Khārijites went still further and declared 'Ā'isha and her group unbelievers. The Sunnites maintained their silence. Perhaps they knew when and where to apportion the blame, but they kept silent on the matter, only saying that this was a case of brothers fighting between themselves.¹

Leaving aside the integrity of the Companions and their reliability, as well as other sectarian interests, if we study the event objectively we find that it was not a battle between believers and unbelievers; indeed, 'Alī himself denied that the other party was irreligious, and when he was asked about Ṭalḥa and az-Zubayr he merely said, 'Our brothers acted against us wrongfully.'² Nor was the conflict due to desire for revenge upon those who murdered 'Uthmān, for, when Marwān b. al-Ḥakam was asked where they were going, he said, 'To kill the murderers of 'Uthmān.' To this the reply was, 'Then kill the leaders of your army, for they are the murderers.'³ This is clear from the attitude of az-Zubayr, 'Ā'isha and Ṭalḥa too. As we have seen, az-Zubayr left the battle; Ṭalḥa was killed by Marwān, and 'Ā'isha regretted her participation. She expressed her grief over it throughout the rest of her life. She would say, 'Would that I had died twenty years before the Battle of the Camel.'⁴ It is

1. Uṣūl, pp. 290-91.

2. *ibid.*, p. 290.

3. Ṭabarī, IV, p. 453.

4. *ibid.*, p. 537.

reported that she did not wish to be buried near the Prophet because of the shame she felt about this event.¹ The battle may have been the result of personal differences and conflicting ambitions, with only a small part played by 'A'isha's hostility to 'Alī; but the major factor was Ibn-az-Zubayr's ambition, which was to lead all these people to this calamitous situation.²

His arrogance may be detected in the words which he used about his aunt 'A'isha when she gave great sums of money as alms. He said that she should not do so, or 'I shall limit her legal competence.' This angered her, and she took an oath never to speak to him again. It was only upon the intercession of 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. al-Aswad and Musawwar b. Makhruma that she relented and gave alms in order to be released from her oath.³ Perhaps Ibn-az-Zubayr was keeping an eye upon the wealth of his aunt and did not like it wasted. Yet he could not control his ambitions, and was tactless in trying to further them. Ibn-Hazm, reporting this, considers his behaviour very reprehensible. Perhaps he considered himself a serious candidate for the Caliphate, but did not say so openly. From the time of his joining the defenders of 'Uthmān, he set about maturing his plans. Some sources claim that the Battle of the Camel was the first stage towards this end. If 'Alī were slain in

1. Iqd, IV, p. 331.

2. ibid., p. 18.

3. Ibn-Hazm, Muḥallā, VIII, pp. 292-93.

the battle, the last of the dominant claimants to the Caliphate would have been removed from the scene, and the way would be open for him. Even his opponents were conscious of this fact. While arguing with Ibn-az-Zubayr, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās said, 'It is you who brought 'A'isha against the Qur'ān.' At another time Mu'āwiya said to him, 'You cheated Umm-al-Mu'minīn and did not respect the Prophet when you brought his wife onto the battle-field.'¹

As regards 'Alī's responsibility for the murder of 'Uthmān, and subsequent events, one must take into account ~~that he had already accepted~~ ^{his haste in accepting} the Caliphate even before the delegations arrived from the other regions. Most of the governors he sent out to replace 'Uthmān's appointees were not accepted in their provinces, and had to return to 'Alī in frustration; the influence of Mu'āwiya is to be seen in this. He ignored the advice of his supporters, and even of his son al-Hasan, when urged not to fight against 'A'isha and not to transfer the capital to Kufa.²

(d) The Result of the Battle

The battle had far-reaching effects on Muslim society, and all later religio-political developments were somehow or other influenced by this event. Although 'Alī succeeded in defeating his opponents, in fact he was left the weaker;

1. 'Iqd, I, p. 16; IV, p. 18.

2. Tiwāl, p. 282; Dhahabī, Tabaqāt, II, pp. 150-51.

firstly, because he lost many of his brave soldiers in this battle, and secondly, because the unity of the Muslim community was further damaged. Most families seem to have been divided by this issue; 'Abd-Allāh b. Khalaf, for example, gave hospitality to 'Ā'isha and her group, while 'Uthmān, his brother, was killed by her soldiers.¹ Likewise, 'Alī lost the chance of united support from Ḥijāz and 'Irāq even before the battle took place.

The situation in Ḥijāz is reported thus: 'Mecca was with 'Ā'isha, the people of Medina were divided, some with 'Alī and some against him and some kept themselves aloof from this situation, such as 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ and others.² Even the whole of 'Irāq was not with 'Alī, and indeed the people of Basra sided with 'Ā'isha and fought with her very bravely.

In the third place, the battle strengthened Mu'āwiya in Syria. It was Mu'āwiya who derived the greatest profit from this development. He watched the course events were taking very shrewdly, and he succeeded in keeping Syria intact while 'Alī's side was weakened by the battle. Having made a political settlement with 'Ā'isha and others, 'Alī was then faced with the need to defeat his real and most dangerous opponent, Mu'āwiya.

1. Ṭiwāl, p. 151; Ṭabarī, IV, p. 534.

2. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 537.

Mu'āwiya claimed his right to take revenge upon the murderers of 'Uthmān on the basis of his relation to him, and he quoted a verse from the Qur'ān in favour of his claim.

'Whosoever shall be slain wrongfully, to his heir have we given powers; but let him not outstep bounds in putting the slayer to death, for he too, in his turn, will be assisted and avenged.'¹

According to this verse, he declared, he was wālī and, for all purposes, waṣī.² He was wālī of this area (Syria) from the time of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, more territories being added to his governorship during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān. Being a shrewd politician and an intelligent administrator, he was popular with the Syrians, and they obeyed him. His suavity and the charm of his personality helped him to win the affection of the people. The Battle of the Camel gave Mu'āwiya time and opportunity to organise the Syrians and prepare them for war.³ He succeeded in creating the impression that 'Alī's cause was wrong because Ṭalḥa, az-Zubayr and 'Ā'isha were against him. Thus, this battle not only caused further division among the Muslims and weakened 'Alī's position, but also helped Mu'āwiya to gain control of the situation.

It seems that, after the Battle of the Camel, 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr remained silent and kept aloof from the struggle

1. Qur'ān, 17:33.
2. Bidāya, VIII, p. 21.
3. Tiwāl, p. 202.

between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya. He could not join 'Alī because he had fought against him, but did not join Mu'āwiya either for reasons of his own.¹ Nothing is reported about his activities during this period except his presence at the time of arbitration (taḥkīm). When the two warring parties agreed on 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ and Abū-Mūsā al-Ash'arī as arbitrators, Mu'āwiya played a political trick. He wrote a letter to some people, inviting them to be witness to the negotiations. According to aṭ-Ṭabarī, he wrote letters to the following persons: 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, Abū-l-Jahm b. Ḥudhayfa and 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. Yaghūth az-Zuhrī.²

Ad-Dīnawarī, while reporting this, mentions that Mu'āwiya estimated the situation correctly and was clever in his operations. He knew that these persons commanded respect among the Muslims and that their presence, at his invitation, would not only influence them but would also affect political thinking generally.³ In taking this step, Mu'āwiya was trying to deprive 'Alī of the support of as many people as he could and thus isolate him. He mentions the name of Muḡhīra b. Abī-Shu'ba among those to whom the letters were written. Perhaps Sa'd b. Abī-Waqqāṣ also received a letter from Mu'āwiya but did not respond to it.

1. Iṣāba, II, p. 311.
2. Ṭabarī, V, p. 67.
3. Tiwāl, p. 198.

Ad-Dīnawarī also reports that 'Umar b. Sa'd came to his father requesting him to be present at the arbitration, but that he refused, saying that this was fitna and believers should not involve themselves in fomenting hostility among the Muslims.¹ During the discussion, when Abū-Mūsā pointed out that 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar was best suited for the Caliphate, 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ replied that Ibn-'Umar was stupid; when 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr reported this to Ibn-'Umar, the latter was annoyed and lost interest in the matter.²

1. Tiwāl, pp. 191-98.

2. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 68-69.

CHAPTER THREE

'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR'S STRUGGLE

AGAINST Umayyad Power

I. The Reign of Mu'āwiyā

(a) The Attitude of 'Abd-Allāh Ibn-az-Zubayr

The prolonged arbitration between the two factions allowed Mu'āwiyā to gain control of the situation, especially after the assassination of 'Alī. His strategy was to involve all the opposing factions of the Quraysh in the negotiations, either actively or merely as observers. He played upon the psychological foibles of each in order to influence them towards his position; and even after the decision had gone in his favour, he still attempted to win over Ibn-az-Zubayr and his followers. Ibn-Qutayba records that he sent gifts of clothes and perfumes to Medina to be given to al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, 'Abd-Allāh b. Ṣafwān and 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, and the messengers bearing these were instructed to report in detail all that they saw and heard. After the messengers had departed, Mu'āwiyā foretold how each would receive the gifts he had sent. Al-Ḥasan, he said, would give a part of them to his wives and the remainder to anyone who was present at the time they arrived. Al-Ḥusayn would give them to the sons of those who had died at Ṣiffīn, fighting on behalf of his father. 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far

would use them to repay his debts, while 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar would give part to the needy members of Banū 'Adī and keep the rest for himself. 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, however, would not himself accept the gifts from the messengers, but instead have certain of his trusted aides receive them; later he would take them, but declare that one day he would return them to Ibn-Hind (i.e. Mu'āwiya). 'Abd-Allāh b. Ṣafwān would think the gifts insignificant, and insist on giving a present for each in return.¹

In 44 A.H.² Mu'āwiya came to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage; and while he was performing the ritual circumambulation of the Ka'ba he was joined by Ibn-az-Zubayr. In the course of their conversation, Mu'āwiya was able to discover the attitude of the latter and the demands he had in mind. Although the atmosphere between the two was amicable, Ibn-az-Zubayr insisted that Mu'āwiya give him one hundred thousand coins (sikka) to be distributed among his people.

When Mu'āwiya finally agreed to this, he was criticised by Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, who was an old rival of Ibn-az-Zubayr dating from the time when 'Uthmān b. 'Affān appointed the latter and not Marwān to lead the defending forces during the insurrection. It may be that both had ambitions for the Caliphate. It is reported that at one time they quarrelled in the presence of Mu'āwiya, and Ibn-az-Zubayr

1. 'Uyūn, III, pp. 40-41.

2. Tabarī, V, p. 215.

said to the latter, 'Do not let Marwān speak against the people of Quraysh. It is only you who prevented us from dealing with him.' To this Mu'āwīya replied, 'If Marwān were to seek this (i.e. the Caliphate), then those inferior to him (i.e. Ibn-az-Zubayr) would seek it also. If, however, Marwān were to renounce such ambitions, then someone superior to him (i.e. his own son, Yazīd) would be in a position to assume the Caliphate. By God, I think you will continue quarrelling until He sends someone who, paying no heed to blood-relationships, will destroy both of you.' At this, Ibn-az-Zubayr exclaimed, 'Then we will have war among ourselves!', and received the answer, 'If war starts, you will learn its bitterness and suffer its burns.'¹

If we can accept the historicity of this conversation, it indicates the technique used by Mu'āwīya throughout his Caliphate to keep potential rivals quiet; for he was certainly aware of the threat that Ibn-az-Zubayr, with his powerful family connections, could present to him if the issue came to war. As well as using such threatening language, he also went out of his way to show him special marks of favour and kindness, and thereby inhibited him from active agitation. Ibn-az-Zubayr, indeed, exploited his special position among the Quraysh, and on one occasion, when Mu'āwīya asked in his presence 'Who is this Ibn-az-Zubayr?', he answered, 'If you do not already know, ask the muhajirūn and the anṣār.' Abū-l-Jahm b. Ḥudhayfa, who was

1. Bayān, II, pp. 72-73; Iqd, IV, pp. 18-19.

present at the time, contrasted the lineage of the two, saying to Mu'āwiya, 'Your mother was Hind, while his was Asmā' bint Abū-Bakr; your father was Abū-Sufyan, while his was az-Zubayr to whom the Prophet promised Paradise. God forbid, therefore, that Abū-Sufyān should be thought equal to az-Zubayr.'¹

As far as can be ascertained from the information given in the sources - most of which is of an apparently trivial anecdotal nature - this truce which lasted between Ibn-az-Zubayr and Mu'āwiya throughout the lifetime of the latter concealed an enmity which was never very far from the surface. On one occasion when Mu'āwiya was leaving Medina, half-asleep as he rode on his mule, Ibn-az-Zubayr overtook him and he awoke, startled. Ibn-az-Zubayr said, 'Had I wanted to, I could have killed you.' Mu'āwiya answered, 'Every bird hunts its proper prey, and you are certainly not a killer of kings.' Ibn-az-Zubayr rejoined angrily, 'My oath of loyalty to you is only for your lifetime, your successor will learn what we are capable of!'²

Mu'āwiya could not have failed to realise that Ibn-az-Zubayr's intimate connection with the Prophet and his earliest supporters, as well as his knowledge of the Qur'ān and the sunna, gave him a superior claim to the office of Caliph, but he had the essential wealth and manpower to

1. Iqd, IV, pp. 16-17.
2. Ibn-'Asākir, VII, pp. 404-7.

counteract all such claims to legitimacy. When eventually he triumphed over 'Alī, there was no longer any power in the young Islāmic world capable of challenging his pretensions, and Ibn-az-Zubayr, too, found it expedient to offer homage to him,¹ in which he was followed by the people of Medina. The true ingenuity and skill of Mu'āwiyā in diplomacy is to be seen in the way he persuaded al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī to publicly renounce his claim to the Caliphate, thereby destroying the morale of the 'Alid faction in and about Medina. This tranquillity which Mu'āwiyā, with his negotiating skills and the loyal support of the Arabs of Syria, was able to produce was to prove transitory; and once he had left the scene, the storm broke out on the heads of his successors.²

(b) Mu'āwiyā and the Sons of the Companions

The year 41 A.H. is known in Islāmic history as 'ām al-jamā'a, 'the year of unity',³ indicating the general acceptance of Mu'āwiyā's Caliphate after the capitulation of al-Ḥasan. But it was not only the latter he had to neutralise; al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, too, as well as the sons of the other Companions, had to be placated. He never refused a request from any of the five 'Abādila: 'Abd-Allāh b. al-'Abbās, 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Abī-Bakr and 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr. They used

1. Qur'ān, 10:10.

2. Iṣāba, II, p. 311.

3. Tabarī, V, p. 158.

to visit him in Damascus, where he gave them lavish hospitality and entertainment, holding them in friendly conversation and never ready to take offence at anything they might say or do. Mecca and Medina, which had formerly been the centres of religion and piety, became, during the Caliphate of Mu'āwiyā, cities of great wealth and luxury.¹

Whatever may have been the true feelings of the sons of the Companions, once they had given the bay'a to Mu'āwiyā they felt compelled to respect his position as long as he remained alive. This oath of allegiance was a covenant, not with an individual, but with Allah, and thus could not be recanted or broken. Knowing this, Mu'āwiyā did not hesitate to remind them of their commitment. Ibn-Qutayba records that he wrote to al-Ḥusayn, 'I have heard news of you which I hope is untrue. Anyone who binds himself with an oath before God must respect it. A person of your position, nobility and significance should be among the first to honour such an oath. You should be mindful of your commitment before God, for otherwise the result will be the division of this nation.'²

Even were these sons of the Companions not scrupulous in the observance of their oaths, the depletion of manpower they suffered as a result of the Battles of the Camel and Siffīn, and in wars with the Khārijites, left them militarily

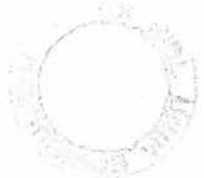
1. Tiwāl, pp. 226-38; Bayān, I, p. 242.

2. 'Uyūn, I, p. 142; Ansāb, IVA, p. 101.

weak in the face of the forces that Mu'āwiyā had at his disposal in Syria. It is unlikely that al-Ḥasan would have capitulated so readily if there had been any possibility of the forces he could muster being a match for those of Mu'āwiyā; and the general lack of unity among the opposition groups made it impossible for such a concentration of manpower to be achieved.

Mu'āwiyā placated his potential challengers in Ḥijāz, even the rival Umayyads, for two reasons. Firstly, he feared that they, and especially the Umayyads in Medina, might instigate popular revolts; and secondly, he wished to play one off against the other so that none might achieve a pre-eminent position which could be exploited against himself. Thus, to some he gave important positions in the administration of Ḥijāz, banishing their predecessors to distant regions and sequestering their property. Throughout his reign, he kept Ḥijāz under careful scrutiny and monitored the activities of the leading figures of the Quraysh present there; for even when the danger of a military challenge from this quarter had passed, these men still retained sufficient influence on the Muslim community at large to undermine his own position. Although Ḥijāz remained peaceful during his reign, he was careful to make periodic visits there on the pretext of performing the hajj or the 'umra.¹

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 232.



(c) Attitudes to the Succession of Yazīd

Mu'āwīya regarded it as of particular importance that he should gain the acquiescence of the Zubayrid party in the bay'a to his son Yazīd, whom he wished to have recognised as his successor (walī 'ahd). According to another account, Mughīra b. Abī-Shu'ba was responsible for securing the nomination of Yazīd, and in aṭ-Ṭabarī the story takes this form: Mughīra, the governor of Kufa, came in 49 A.H. to Mu'āwīya, complaining that he was in ill-health and needed assistance. However, Mu'āwīya's response to this was to appoint Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ as governor in his place. Knowing that it would please Mu'āwīya, Mughīra then went to Yazīd and declared that he should be Caliph after his father's death, and paid homage to him; thereupon he was immediately reinstated in office, in the expectation that he would be active in securing support for the walī 'ahd¹ among the people of Kufa when the time came.

Al-Ya'qūbī's² version of the affair has it that Mu'āwīya wanted to have Yazīd given recognition as his successor shortly after the death of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī. The latter had secured the agreement of Mu'āwīya to his own right of succeeding to the Caliphate, but his death in 49 A.H. had left the way open for Yazīd. In fact, al-Ya'qūbī

1. Aṣfahānī, Aghānī, VIII, p. 104.

2. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 261; 'Uyūn, I, p. 142; 'Iqd, I, p. 98; Ṭabarī, V, pp. 301-2.

claims that Mu'āwīya was responsible for the death of al-Ḥasan so that he might ensure his own son's succession to the Caliphate after his death.¹

Mu'āwīya was at pains to keep Yazīd in the public eye. In the campaign against Constantinople in 49 or 50 A.H., in which Ibn-az-Zubayr, too, took part, Yazīd was placed in command of the Muslim forces.² In 51 A.H. he had him appointed leader of the hajj.³ We hear little of Yazīd again until 56 A.H., when Mu'āwīya came to Mecca for the 'umra. His visit was opposed by the five 'Abādila, who realised that his intention was to gain support for the bay'a to Yazīd, and in this they were joined by al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī. Mu'āwīya approached each of these individually, and secured from al-Ḥusayn an assurance that he was not attempting to influence the Quraysh against Yazīd's succession and that he would do as the others did. After al-Ḥusayn, it was Ibn-az-Zubayr who was the most important to be won over; if these two fell in with his plans, all the others would probably follow suit, and in fact both Ibn-'Umar and Ibn-'Abbās declared themselves ready to do so.

Mu'āwīya took advantage of his presence in Medina to bring the problem of Caliphal succession into prominence as a political issue. He raised the question as to why this should be in the line of Hāshim rather than any other

1. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 209.

2. Ṭabarī, V, p. 233.

3. Ya'qūbī, *ibid.*, p. 226.

branch of the Quraysh; he asked if it was essential that there be a family relationship with the Prophet, or if maturity and the respect of the umma were sufficient in themselves. His own position was that mere kinship with the Prophet, in the absence of other qualities, was not an adequate entitlement to this office, and he pointed out that, were it so, al-'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle, would have been chosen in preference to Abū-Bakr. In fact, al-'Abbās himself accepted this and paid homage to Abū-Bakr after the people had agreed to have him as Caliph.¹

Nevertheless, Mu'āwīya was unable at this time to gain the consent of the Zubayrid group in the matter of the bay'a to Yazīd, and he returned to Damascus dissatisfied. However, he did not relax his efforts in this direction, and sought to enlist support from his wulāt in Medina and Mecca. The governor of Medina, Marwān b. al-Hakam, informed him that the people of the city were still under the influence of Ibn-az-Zubayr, and added that he himself, even though he was of Banū Umayya, had reservations about making the bay'a to Yazīd, and in this he was supported by Sa'īd b. 'Uthmān and others.² Mu'āwīya's reaction was to replace him with Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, who was no more successful in winning over public opinion in Medina. When Mu'āwīya insisted that Sa'īd be more energetic in this matter, the

1. 'Uyūn, I, pp. 5-6.

2. Tabarī, V, p. 304.

latter still protested that nothing could be done in the face of the people's adherence to Ibn-az-Zubayr. Next Mu'āwiya appealed to Ibn-az-Zubayr directly, in a letter written in verse:

I have seen generous people who, having themselves been treated generously, become even more generous.

They value highly the generosity extended by those who are powerful.

Others who are not generous can be easily misled and they are capable of falling like the Devil who tried to seduce Adam; but it was the Devil who was rejected and overthrown.

I hesitated to give you what you wanted from me; and thus God will recompense him who is the more evil of us two.

Ibn-az-Zubayr's reply was also in verse:

I wish God, whom I worship, to degrade those who are most unjust and who dare question

His wisdom and hasten to corruption.

One can be fooled by one who supposes he is wise; he is not naturally so but only pretends.

If you desire to undertake what you have mentioned you will find me a lion in defence.

I swear if it had not been for the word of loyalty which I gave to you and which I cannot withdraw, nothing would have saved you from me.¹

1. Imāma, I, pp. 179-80.

Seeing that Ibn-az-Zubayr was adamant, and that he enjoyed the support of the Medinese, Mu'āwiya replaced Sa'īd by Marwān as his wālī.¹ In 59 A.H. he came in person to the city, and this time he decided to resort to threats in order to gain his object. When, as customary, al-Ḥusayn and Ibn-az-Zubayr came out to meet him on his arrival, his first words were, 'O Ḥusayn, your punishment will be an example to the others', and to Ibn-az-Zubayr he said, 'Do not use your deceits against me.'²

Knowing that the presence of these two would be an obstacle, Mu'āwiya deliberately insulted them in this way so that they would leave the city; and, in fact, both did depart for Mecca immediately. He was more placatory with 'Ā'isha; and when, during a visit by him to her home, she blamed him for the deaths of her brother Muḥammad and the pious Ḥujr b. 'Adī, he explained that he, too, found this affair painful but that he lost control of himself because of the injuries he had suffered at the hands of al-Ḥusayn and Ibn-az-Zubayr.³ She then referred to the threats he had just uttered against them, evoking from Mu'āwiya the declaration that they were as dear to him as his life but that he simply did not know what was to be done with them. She cautioned him to be prudent, and expressed the hope that the difficulty would be resolved.⁴

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1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 304.
 2. *ibid.*, p. 305.
 3. *ibid.*, p. 257.
 4. 'Awāṣim, II, p. 437.

Having won the support of the people of Medina, Mu'āwiya next went to Mecca where he hoped to win over the local Zubayrids and others in that city. His stratagem now was one of friendliness, and when he saw Ibn-az-Zubayr he addressed him, 'O son of the cousin and disciple of the Messenger of Allah, born of the daughter of Abū-Bakr.' He mounted Ibn-az-Zubayr on his own mule and walked in Mecca beside him. His greeting to al-Ḥusayn, too, was in the same respectful tone, 'O son of the daughter of Muḥammad and lion of the Arabs.'¹ Although suspicious of this change in behaviour on the part of Mu'āwiya, the Zubayrid party were prepared to deal reasonably with him, and they had agreed that they should remain silent and allow Ibn-az-Zubayr to conduct the negotiations on their behalf. When, in the presence of the people in the mosque, Mu'āwiya asked him for his views on the matter of Yazīd's succession, he replied with the ḥadīth, 'It is wrong to pay homage to two persons at the same time. When this happens, let the second one be slain.'² And he added, 'If you are tired of the responsibility of the Caliphate, step down and let us pay homage to him (Yazīd). If, however, we give our oath to him as well as to you, to whom shall we listen and whom obey? By God, it is forbidden in Islām! I would suggest three ways in which it might accord with Islām: first, you

1. Ibn-Khayyāṭ, Ta'rīkh, p. 254.

2. Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, Vol. II, part one, p. 209.

could do as the Prophet did, who died without appointing a successor, leaving the choice to the Companions. They elected Abū-Bakr, who, they believed, would satisfy them. Second, you could do as Abū-Bakr did, who appointed 'Umar while on his deathbed, believing him to have the qualities of a good leader. Family relationship with him was not a consideration, for 'Umar was of the clan of Banū 'Adī. Third, you could consider what 'Umar did, in his appointing a six-man council to choose one of their number as his successor. His son was only to be a witness.¹

Mu'āwiya now decided that these people could only be persuaded by force. He summoned al-Ḥusayn and Ibn-az-Zubayr to accompany him to the mosque, talking and laughing on the way there in the friendliest of manners as though there was no disagreement among them. Once arrived there, however, he assigned members of his personal troops to stand alongside each of them, and he warned them that if they should interfere when he started speaking they would be struck down before they had uttered a word. He then announced to the congregation that their leaders had accepted Yazīd as his successor; and as there was no protest at this from al-Ḥusayn and Ibn-az-Zubayr, the people of Mecca, also, gave their oath of allegiance.²

1. 'Awāṣim, II, p. 445; Kāmil, III, p. 423;
Ibn-Khayyāṭ, p. 256.
2. 'Awāṣim, *ibid.*, pp. 446-47.

It was thus that Mu'āwiya prepared the way for his son's succession; and while on his deathbed he is reported to have said to him, 'My son, I have saved you the trouble of running about and I have placed the halter of the Arabs in your hands. I have also soothed all enmities towards you and I have gathered for you what cannot be gathered by anyone else. On your behalf, I am worried about four individuals:

'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, a religious man, who will definitely support you even if no one else does.

'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Abī-Bakr, who is a weak, insignificant man.

Al-Husayn b. 'Alī is like a lion in stature. God protect you from him along with those who killed his father and abandoned his brother. However, when you are able to have him under your control you should be generous to him, because he is both generous and significant.

'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr is a lion in stature but a fox when weakened. If he stands against you, and you defeat him, you should cut him to pieces.¹

1. Tabarī, V, p. 323.

II. After the Death of Mu'āwiyā

(a) Ibn-az-Zubayr's Relations with al-Ḥusayn and their Attitude towards Yazīd

The death of Mu'āwiyā occurred on Thursday 14 Rajab, 60 A.H.,¹ and he was succeeded as Caliph by Yazīd, whose first act was to write to the wālī of Medina, Walīd b. 'Utba, instructing him to take a firm line with Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī. This letter was written in great haste and was so short that it was said to be 'the size of a mouse's ear'. In it he informed the wālī of the death of his father, and urged him to secure the oath of allegiance from his two rivals, using force if necessary.² Walīd was very grieved at the news of the death of Mu'āwiyā, and he at once summoned Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and the other leaders of Banū Umayya to inform them. Relations between Walīd and Marwān had been strained, but this new turn of events compelled them to co-operate.

Marwān's advice was that Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn should be summoned at once and forced to profess their allegiance to Yazīd; if they refused they should be killed. The summons reached Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn while they were at prayer in the mosque, and, perplexed by such a call at this late hour, they discussed the probable reason for it.

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 324; Ibn-Khayyāṭ, p. 280.

2. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 322; Ya'qūbī, II, p. 229.

Al-Ḥusayn guessed correctly that their tyrant (ṭāghiya) was dead and that they were to be asked to take the oath of allegiance to Yazīd. They agreed that if this was actually the case they would both answer in the same way.

Al-Ḥusayn was the first to go to the wālī; and when he saw Walīd and Marwān sitting together he realised that something had happened to make them overcome their former enmity. When he was informed of Mu'āwiya's death and asked to swear fealty to Yazīd, he said that he would prefer to wait until the following day when he would publicly make this profession in the mosque along with the rest of the Medinese. This did not satisfy Marwān, who urged the wālī to demand the oath at once or to behead al-Ḥusayn. The latter reacted to this with such a violent attack on Marwān that the wālī became frightened and allowed him to depart, asking him to be patient.

Such is the account as found in aṭ-Ṭabarī, Ibn-Khayyāṭ and Ibn-ʿAsākir.¹ However, al-Yaʿqūbī has a different version of the events: when Walīd's messenger came to Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn, they informed him that they would wait until the morning before meeting him. Marwān, worried that they might leave Medina and go to Mecca, insisted that they should be made to come at once; however, Walīd agreed to wait. In the event, Marwān's fears proved to be true, and both of them departed in the night for Mecca.²

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1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 339-40; Ibn-Khayyāṭ, pp. 282-83; Ibn-ʿAsākir, VII, p. 40.
 2. Yaʿqūbī, II, pp. 17-20.

Al-Balādhūrī records another account: Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn went to the wālī, but in response to his request that they swear allegiance to Yazīd they suggested that he should make a public announcement of the death of Mu'āwiyā in the mosque on the following day, and that they would then take the bay'a along with the rest of the people. This is the version found, also, in Ibn-Qutayba's al-Imāma.¹ In ad-Dīnawarī we read that Ibn-az-Zubayr, on hearing of Mu'āwiyā's death, retired to his house so that he might avoid meeting the wālī; and when night fell he left for Mecca under cover of darkness.²

What actually emerges from these various accounts is a clear indication that neither Ibn-az-Zubayr nor al-Ḥusayn could any longer feel secure from the hostility of Banū Umayya in Medina, and that the conflict between the contending claimants for the leadership of the Islāmic community was about to manifest itself in civil war. The reaction of Walīd when he heard of their escape to Mecca shows to what extent the political tension had increased. Friends of Ibn-az-Zubayr, such as 'Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī' and Muṣ'ab b. 'Awf az-Zuhayrī, were placed under arrest; and the young men of Banū 'Adī, when unable to secure their release through mediation, broke into their prison and freed them. Walīd's failure to coerce the two great rivals to Yazīd's authority caused his dismissal as wālī of Medina, and he

1. Imāma, I, pp. 204-5.

2. Ṭiwāl, p. 228.

was replaced by another member of the Umayyad family, 'Amr b. Sa'id b. al-'Āṣ.¹

The position of 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar and 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās is presented as being motivated by concern for the unity of the umma, and consequently they tried to dissuade Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥusayn from the course they were taking. Both waited until they learned that the other Islamic communities had accepted Yazīd before taking the bay'a themselves.² Thus the sons of the Companions were now divided into at least three different groups, fragmenting whatever unity they might once have had in the face of the Umayyads.

Once arrived in Mecca, Ibn-az-Zubayr took refuge in the vicinity of the Black Stone; and, putting on his military armour (maghāfir),³ he began to arouse the people against Yazīd. He described himself as al-'ā'idh bi-l-Haram ('he who takes sanctuary');⁴ and in his addresses to the people he put forward his own position in the dispute as desiring merely that right should be restored. For himself he wanted neither money nor luxury. The affairs of the state should be settled by the shūrā (by which he meant the will of the Muslims), and his own credo was 'No rule but that of God'. This was a principle formulated

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 343. .

2. *ibid.*, pp. 341-42.

3. Ansāb, IVB, p. 27.

4. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 343.

by the Khawārij about the time of the arbitration, and by using it he hoped to gain their support. Those people of Mecca and Medina who were opposed to the Umayyads saw in him a centre about which they could rally, and they pledged their support for his cause beneath the minbar of the mosque.¹

(b) The Relationship of al-Ḥusayn and Ibn-az-Zubayr

Accompanied by his sons and brothers, and by all the other members of his family with the exception of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, al-Ḥusayn moved to Mecca at the end of Rajab, 60 A.H. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya advised him before his departure that he should not leave Ḥijāz.² The relations of al-Ḥusayn with Ibn-az-Zubayr in Mecca are variously reported in the histories, some accounts mentioning that he was advised by the latter to remain in Mecca where he would assist him in his claim to the Caliphate,³ while others hold that he experienced nothing but hatred from him. This rancour was supposed to have dated from the time of Ibn-az-Zubayr's hostility to 'Alī at the Battle of the Camel, and was further aggravated by al-Ḥasan's capitulation to Mu'āwiya.

1. Aghānī, I, p. 61.

2. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 341-42.

3. ibid., pp. 384-85; Ṭiwāl, p. 244.

One need not, of course, resort to such explanations; the fact that each was seeking the same goal for himself - the Caliphate - made them natural enemies. In the eyes of the people al-Ḥusayn seemed to have the greater claim, and one must therefore treat with reserve the reports that Ibn-az-Zubayr urged him to remain in Ḥijāz. In fact, most of the sources are agreed that the contrary was true, that Ibn-az-Zubayr counselled al-Ḥusayn to go to 'Irāq where he could count on the support of his father's partisans. Al-Ya'qūbī was the first to record that Ibn-az-Zubayr offered to help al-Ḥusayn to gain the Caliphate if he would remain in Mecca.¹

The four latter months of 60 A.H. were critical for the struggle for the Caliphate. The sacred character of Mecca afforded a sanctuary for Ibn-az-Zubayr where he could feel secure from the attacks of the Umayyads, while al-Ḥusayn thought that he was protected by virtue of his descent from the Prophet and could therefore risk moving to 'Irāq. It was clearly of advantage to Ibn-az-Zubayr that so prominent a person as al-Ḥusayn should also be in open rebellion against the Umayyads, and he was prepared to see co-operation with him as the first step in securing his own ultimate objective. It must, therefore, have seemed a windfall to him when al-Ḥusayn decided to remove his presence from Ḥijāz and leave him as the sole contender in what was seen as the central arena of events. There is

1. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 19.

a certain air of hypocrisy in the eulogy spoken by Ibn-az-Zubayr at the Ka'ba when the news of al-Ḥusayn's murder reached Mecca,¹ and he must have been delighted to see not only the removal of a rival but also the additional support against Yazīd which he would gain by the revulsion this outrage created among the Muslims. The only contender left in the field, he was now the natural leader of all anti-Umayyad feeling, and this position was enhanced by the vindictive attitude taken against him by Yazīd.

(c) Ibn-az-Zubayr and Yazīd

Although Ibn-az-Zubayr declared open war against Yazīd² after the death of al-Ḥusayn, he still did not proclaim his ambitions for the Caliphate, preferring to carry on his activities in this direction secretly and averring that the people should make the choice. Because he had taken refuge in the Ka'ba, Yazīd could not attack him directly without violating the injunctions of the Qur'ān on this matter;³ at the same time, he could not allow him to control the two spiritual centres of Islām. For one year he tried to win over Ibn-az-Zubayr by persuasion,⁴ but the letters he wrote received only the reply that it was the shūrā alone which should decide such matters.⁵

1. Tabarī, V, pp. 474-75.
2. *ibid.*
3. Qur'ān, 2:191.
4. Aghānī, I, p. 33.
5. Ansāb, IVB, p. 16.

Several prominent supporters of the Umayyads, including 'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, Walīd b. 'Utba and 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Sufyān, were appointed governors of Mecca and Medina, but they were unable to take Ibn-az-Zubayr unawares.¹ One of these, probably Walīd b. 'Utba, appointed Yaḥyā b. Ḥakīm b. Ṣafwān 'āmil of Mecca, instructing him to seize Ibn-az-Zubayr by force. Apparently he carried out his orders with great ruthlessness, for Ibn-az-Zubayr began to worry that his followers would disperse out of fear. He approached Yaḥyā b. Ḥakīm b. Ṣafwān, and insisted that he was obedient to him and that the only reason he was taking sanctuary in the Ka'ba was his fear of the cruelty of Walīd b. 'Utba, the wālī of Medina. He added that since the time of Mu'āwiya many illegal and unprecedented acts had taken place, and it was as a precaution against such that he sought the refuge of the Holy Compound.² At the same time Ibn-az-Zubayr wrote to Yazīd, complaining about Walīd b. 'Utba: 'You have sent us a rash governor who has no respect for reason; had you delegated a more lenient man, he might have succeeded in bringing together the various factions.'³ Yazīd interpreted this as meaning that Ibn-az-Zubayr was prepared to negotiate the matter, and accordingly

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 478-79.

2. Ibn-'Asākir, VII, p. 40.

3. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 479.

he sought to meet his demands by replacing Walīd by ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Sufyān¹ as wālī of Medina, at the same time sending a delegation consisting of an-Nu‘mān b. Bashīr al-Anṣārī, Hishām b. Qabīṣa and others to Mecca to open discussions with Ibn-az-Zubayr. He appears to have been hopeful of the outcome, encouraged also by the reports he had received from Yaḥyā b. Ḥakīm; and the men he chose to represent him reflect his eagerness to propitiate Ibn-az-Zubayr. An-Nu‘mān was an old friend of the latter, and was the first child born into the anṣār after the Hijra, just as Ibn-az-Zubayr was the first born into the muhājirūn.² In fact, after the death of Yazīd, an-Nu‘mān joined Ibn-az-Zubayr and acted for him as wālī of Ḥimṣ until he met his death in battle in 64 A.H.

When the delegation reached Medina, ‘Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī‘ warned them that he would never support the claim of Yazīd over that of Ibn-az-Zubayr, only to be reminded by an-Nu‘mān that the people of Ḥijāz would not be able to hold out against the forces of Syria.³ On arrival in Mecca they presented to Ibn-az-Zubayr the concessions that Yazīd was prepared to grant, specifically that he would be appointed

1. He arrived in Medina late in 62 A.H. He was young and inexperienced, and careless of his responsibilities - a circumstance that could only be pleasing to Ibn-az-Zubayr. See Tabarī, V, pp. 479-80; ‘Iqd, IV, p. 387; Fāsī, Shifā’, p.168.
2. Tabarī, *ibid.*, pp. 480-81.
3. *ibid.*

wālī of the whole of Ḥijāz and that special consideration would be shown to his family and relations. However, Ibn-az-Zubayr showed himself to be in no mood for compromise, and replied to this offer disdainfully, 'You ask me to lend my support to a man who drinks wine, never performs the prayers, and spends his time in hunting.'¹

During the negotiations Ibn-az-Zubayr noticed that an-Nu'mān b. Bashīr seemed favourable to his own claim, and sought to win him over to his side. Nevertheless, on having their proposals refused, the delegation returned to Yazīd. Sensing the uncertainty of the situation, Yaḥyā b. Ḥakīm, the wālī of Mecca, thought it prudent not to commit himself too definitely to either faction, and adopted a lenient and conciliatory attitude to Ibn-az-Zubayr which was to lead to his being removed from office.

Angry at the rebuff he had suffered, Yazīd was prepared to send an army to Ḥijāz, but was restrained by 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far and by Mu'āwiya b. Yazīd, his own son. Instead, he despatched another delegation, headed by the same an-Nu'mān b. Bashīr and composed of twelve of the leading figures in Syria: al-Ḥuṣayn b. Namīr as-Sukanī, Muslim b. 'Uqba, Zufār b. al-Ḥārith, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Uḍāda, Rawḥ b. Zinbā', Mālīk b. Hubayra, Mālīk b. Ḥamza, Abū-Kabsh, Zāmil b. 'Amr, 'Abd-Allāh b. Mas'adi, Nāthil b. Qays and aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Qays. They were to inform Ibn-az-Zubayr of Yazīd's displeasure at the treatment given to the

1. Ibn-Khayyāt, pp. 316-17.

previous delegation, but that he was still prepared to forgive him if he would publicly demonstrate his submission by returning with the present envoys and entering Damascus with his hands in shackles.¹ The latter humiliating condition was presented in the most inoffensive way possible: the shackles would be very light and could be concealed by his clothing.

Clearly, Ibn-az-Zubayr could not accept such an offer, however much Yazīd might promise him in return. When he scornfully rejected these terms, he was reminded of what had happened to al-Ḥusayn at Karbalā'. To this he replied, 'al-Ḥusayn went to the people who did not appreciate him well. All the Muslims have promised to support me.'²

This delegation, too, had to return to Yazīd empty-handed; and after they had departed Ibn-az-Zubayr, realising that it would be impossible to maintain a pretence of amity any longer, began to make preparations for the attack he anticipated by forming alliances with the chiefs of Tihāma and Ḥijāz, from whom he received an oath of allegiance.³ However, among the historians, only ad-Dīnawarī says that these alliances were made at this time, the others holding that they were made only after the death of Yazīd. In any case, Ibn-az-Zubayr felt strong enough to defy al-Ḥārith b. Khālīd, the 'āmil of Mecca, refusing to allow him to lead the people in prayer.⁴

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 475.

2. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 246.

3. Ṭiwāl, p. 274.

4. Shifā', p. 168.

(d) The Battle of the Harra

Although the conflict between Ibn-az-Zubayr and Yazīd is presented in terms of personalities, it cannot be doubted that basically it was a struggle for the economic survival of Hijāz which, since the expansions, had been deprived of the prosperity it had formerly enjoyed from the transit trade. Mu'āwiya seems to have anticipated the opposition towards Syria that this would evoke, and believed that the region could be forced into submission by a demonstration of the strength he commanded when, accompanied by a large army, he performed the 'umra in 56 A.H.; and his deathbed advice to Yazīd was to tolerate no opposition from this quarter.¹

Religion, too, was a divisive factor in the situation. All the military and political achievements of the early Caliphate had been made under the auspices of Islām, and as Hijāz had been the energising centre of the movement so, too, was it the custodian of the ideals which gave unity to the infant empire. When Syria, under Mu'āwiya and Yazīd, asserted its own autonomy, this was seen by the people of Hijāz as a defection from religion. As they had no political principles which could be held to be inviolate, their reaction against this defection had to be expressed in terms of the new religion, giving rise to the Umayyads' reputation for godlessness, which in effect means secularism.

1. Ibn-Khayyāt, p. 256; Imāma, I, p. 179.

In addition to being responsible for the murder of al-Ḥusayn, Yazīd had also inspired the attempted conquest of Mecca by 'Amr b. az-Zubayr, the half-brother of 'Abd-Allāh. 'Amr's mother, Umm-Khālīd, was of Banū Umayya, being the daughter of Khālīd b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ who was related to 'Amr b. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, the wālī of Medina at the time of 'Amr's attack on Mecca. In the course of this battle he was taken prisoner and killed in prison by the supporters of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr.¹

The revolt which broke out in Medina in 63 A.H. was not as spontaneous as Wellhausen² presents it. Unable to agree upon a common leader, the various factions each rallied round one of their own choice. The Quraysh supported 'Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī', a partisan of Ibn-az-Zubayr, while the anṣār found their leader in 'Abd-Allāh b. Ḥanzāla.³ In addition, Ibn-az-Zubayr appointed his brother 'Ubayda as head of Medina.⁴

Although all factions were opposed to Yazīd, there was not yet agreement as to who should be Caliph, and they left the matter to be settled later by consultation and negotiation. Ibn-az-Zubayr appeared to favour this course, but there is no doubt that it was he who instigated the revolt and that he saw himself as the one who would eventually be

1. Ansāb, IVB, p. 26.

2. The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, pp. 153-54.

3. Ibn-Khayyāt, pp. 289-90.

4. Ṭabarī, V, p. 622.

chosen. Before the fighting actually broke out, Yazīd sent a delegation to Medina to investigate the causes of the dissatisfaction and attempt to appease the anger. Medina, too, sent a delegation to Yazīd, consisting of Mundhir b. az-Zubayr, ‘Abd-Allāh b. ‘Amr b. Ḥafṣ al-Makhzūmi and others. Although they were received with special marks of favour, apparently no agreement could be reached; and, when they returned, Ibn-az-Zubayr summoned them to Mecca to report on what had transpired. As they entered the mosque where he was taking refuge, they took off their turbans and shoes as a sign that Yazīd should be dethroned.¹

On hearing of this, Yazīd did not at first resort to arms, but sent an-Nu‘mān b. Bashīr to Medina in a final attempt to achieve a peaceful settlement, instructing him, however, to warn the Medinese what would happen if they persisted in their obduracy.² Among other inducements, an-Nu‘mān was authorised to tell them that Yazīd would give them half-yearly subsidies (‘aṭā), one in winter and one in summer, that he would fix the price of their wheat on a level with that of Damascus, and that he would restore the payments which had been stopped after the death of Mu‘āwiya.

An-Nu‘mān was no more successful this time than previously; Ibn-az-Zubayr's representative, ‘Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī‘, was afraid that if the latest concessions became

1. Aghānī, I, p. 177.

2. Ṭabarī, V, p. 481.

known to the people of Medina they might change their attitude, and consequently he showed himself unyielding and obstructive. Yazīd's next move was a threatening letter to the Medinese, warning of what lay in store for them if they did not relent. The result of this letter was the outright revolt of the city.¹

The people besieged the wālī, 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Sufyān, in the Qaṣr al-Imāra, refusing to listen to his appeals for the prevention of bloodshed.² Other supporters of the Umayyads were in the house with him, one of whom - probably Ḥabīb b. Karab - was sent to Damascus to inform Yazīd and ask for help. In the letter he carried the situation was described as very serious, the besieged people being without water and suffering other privations.³

The historians are not agreed on the events of this period. Some say that the local Umayyads were driven out of the city by the people when they learned that Yazīd's army was approaching,⁴ while others claim that Ibn-az-Zubayr gave them permission to leave peacefully, with assurances that they would not be molested if they promised not to join in any hostilities that might result.⁵ Nevertheless, it

1. Imāma, I, pp. 177-78.

2. Aghānī, VIII, p. 35.

3. 'Awāṣim, I, p. 224; Ṭabarī, V, p. 481; Imāma, II, p. 7.

4. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, V, p. 78.

5. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*; Imāma, *ibid.*

seems that some of the rabble stoned them as they were leaving.¹ They remained for ten days at Dhū Khashab (on the outskirts of Medina), and one account holds that it was from here that 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad sent the message to Yazīd, along with his torn shirt. Yazīd asked, were there not one thousand Umayyads in Medina, and was not such a force able to put up a fight? To this Ḥabīb answered that the people were united against them, and that their numbers were too few to put up effective resistance.² Ibn-'Arabī reports that only four of the Medinese leaders refused to join in this movement against the Umayyads: 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya and 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn.³

Yazīd was now resolved on what action should be taken, fearing that any further attempts at negotiation might be seen as weakness. He informed the people of Damascus of the state of affairs and, erecting a tent outside his palace as a mustering centre, collected an army.⁴ He appointed 'Abd-Allāh b. Miṣ'ada al-Fazārī to lead the contingent of Damascus, al-Ḥusayn b. Namīr to command that of Ḥimṣ, Ḥubaysh b. Dalaja that of Jordan, Rawḥ b. Zinbā' that of Palestine, and Ṭarīf b. al-Khashkhāsh that of Qinnasrīn. He asked 'Ubayd-Allāh b. Ziyād to be the commander-in-chief,

1. Aghānī, VIII, p. 35.
2. Ṭabarī, V, p. 481.
3. 'Awāsim, I, p. 224.
4. 'Iqd, IV, p. 388.

but he refused, saying, 'I cannot comply with your request this time. You have killed al-Ḥusayn, and now you are collecting a large army to be used against Medina and Mecca. To this I cannot consent.'

Remembering his father's deathbed advice, Yazīd called on Muslim b. 'Uqba to take command, knowing that he was anxious to avenge the murder of the Caliph 'Uthmān.¹ It would appear that some individuals tried to dissuade Yazīd from taking this action against the Holy Cities, only to be told that, after the many marks of favour he had shown the people of the region, they had brought this attack on their own heads. 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far enquired what objectives Yazīd had in mind and whether, in the event of the people of Medina accepting him as Caliph, he would grant them pardon. Yazīd declared that he wanted the first of his armies to capture Ibn-az-Zubayr, whom he held responsible for this revolt. It would go to Mecca by way of Medina, and if the people of the latter showed no resistance they would receive his pardon, be granted the twice-yearly subsidy and enjoy such favour as he had never shown before. 'Abd-Allāh wrote to Medina, urging them not to attempt resistance.

The army sent into Ḥijāz is said to have been of from five to twenty thousand men, between the ages of twenty and fifty.² The people of Medina dug a trench round the city

1. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 298; Bidāya, VIII, p. 219.

2. Ansāb, IVB, p. 3.

and poured tar into every source of water on the approaches to the city. On reaching the Wādī l-Qurā the army met the Umayyads who had been expelled from Medina, and one of them, 'Amr b. 'Uthmān, was asked to give information about the conditions in the city.¹ He refused, claiming that he had given his word not to betray the Medinese.

Marwān b. al-Ḥakam sent his son 'Abd-al-Malik on ahead to Muslim b. 'Uqba, suggesting that his troops should rest on the outskirts of the city in a place to the east called Ḥarrat Banū Zahra, having first surrounded the walls. At sunrise, the army should resume their march, when the reflections of the sun from their arms and armour would dazzle the eyes of the defenders.² According to another version it was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam himself who gave this advice to Muslim b. 'Uqba,³ in violation of the oath he had made to the Medinese, when allowed to leave the city, that he would not act against them. Other Umayyads also broke their pledge and joined the Syrians. On hearing of Muslim's treachery, the people of Medina exclaimed that they would take their stand at the minbar of the Prophet and put up a fight.

The Syrian army reached Medina on the 24 Dhū l-Ḥijja, 63 A.H. The people of the city were given three days' grace in which to consider surrendering, being told that

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 485-87.

2. *ibid.*

3. Imāma, I, p. 179.

Yazīd considered them men of nobility and wished to avoid shedding their blood. The purpose of this invasion was solely to capture Ibn-az-Zubayr. At the end of this period the Medinese announced that they would not capitulate, and warfare started on the 27 Dhū l-Ḥijja.

The accounts of the battle all dwell on the courageous resistance shown by the Medinese, who at one point almost killed Muslim b. 'Uqba. Realising that the fighting would be more severe than he had expected, he appealed to Marwān for assistance. By fair promises the latter persuaded the men of Banū Ḥārith, who were in the Medinese ranks, to defect and allow the Syrians to enter the city. Confusion descended on the defending forces when they heard the battle-cries of the enemy coming from the heart of the city. Defeat followed immediately.¹

Reports of the number of casualties suffered by the Medinese differ in the sources, Ibn-Qutayba² placing the figure in the thousands. This must be regarded as exaggerated, and the more likely total is that given by Ibn-'Abd-Rabbih who speaks of three hundred and sixty deaths, including Arabs and Mawālī.³ The conduct of Muslim b. 'Uqba after his victory is also presented in the most outrageous terms. Horses were allowed to walk over the Prophet's grave; all the Companions were slain, so that

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 494-95.

2. Imāma, I, pp. 180-84.

3. 'Iqd, IV, p. 390.

there did not survive a single member of the anṣār. He gave his troops licence to behave as they wished, and the usual stories of sexual violation are retailed. It is significant that the first account we have of this comes from al-Jāḥiẓ, who was writing in 256 A.H. at the height of 'Abbāsīd power, and even he has his doubts about the truth of the matter.¹ Whence these reports originated is not known, even al-Balādhurī in his Ansāb omitting to make an attribution to the account he gives.² Both al-Ya'qūbī and al-Maqrīzī are so obviously biased against the Umayyads that their extravagant statements about rape and the licentiousness of the Syrians can safely be disregarded.³ Considering the efforts that had been made by Yazīd to win over the people of Medina by peaceful negotiation, and that it was only as a last resort that he put the issue to the sword, it must be found unlikely that he would have exacerbated the feelings of hostility in the community in this way after he had gained his objective.

1. Rasā'il, I, p. 201.

2. Ansāb, IVB, p. 37.

3. Ya'qūbī, II, p. 298; Maqrīzī, Nizā', p. 16.

(e) The First Siege of Mecca

During the Battle of the Ḥarra, Ibn-az-Zubayr was in Mecca leading the people in the ceremonies of the hajj and acting as imām in their prayers. He maintained that succession to the Caliphate should be made by consultation among the Muslims, and in this he seems to have enjoyed the support of the Umayyad ‘āmil of the city, al-Ḥārith b. Khālīd al-Makhzūmī.¹

We are told that it was not until the 1 Muḥarram, 64 A.H., that he was informed of the battle which had been fought at Medina and of the sufferings endured by the people of that city. Realising that he and Mecca would next attract the attention of Muslim b. ‘Uqba's forces, he began to make preparations for defence, joined by refugees from Medina. All the men who were preparing for the defence of the city paid homage to 'the man who had taken refuge in the House of God' - i.e. Ibn-az-Zubayr - ² but this was not yet equivalent to the bay‘a of the Caliphate, rather a recognition of him as the most fitting leader in the crisis that was breaking upon them.

It is significant that among the men who rallied to the support of Ibn-az-Zubayr at this time were certain Khārijites, notably Rajā’ an-Numayrī who induced the fighting men of Sharāt to go to the defence of Mecca and the Ka‘ba.³ Another was Najda b. ‘Āmir al-Ḥanafī, who

1. ‘Uyūn, I, pp. 197-98.

2. Ibn-‘Asākir, VII, p. 412.

3. Bidāya, VIII, p. 225.

arrived from the Yamāma, to be joined later by 'Isā b. al-Ḥaẓẓī and 'Umayr b. ar-Raqqāshi from Basra leading a small force of sixteen horsemen. Even more remarkable is the account that the Negus (an-Najāshī) of Abyssinia sent two hundred Christian troops to assist in the protection of the Holy City.¹

Having appointed Rawḥ b. Zinbā' al-Judhāmī wālī of Medina, Muslim b. 'Uqba set out for Mecca in the middle of Muḥarram, 64 A.H.² However, on the way he died, and was succeeded in his command by al-Ḥuṣayn b. Namīr as-Sukanī, whom he had personally designated when he felt his end was near. He was buried in a valley near Mecca, called Mār az-Zahrān.³ The army advanced and made camp between al-Ḥujūn and Bi'r Maymūn. Here al-Ḥuṣayn received a visit from 'Abd-Allāh b. Ṣafwān, a leading supporter of Ibn-az-Zubayr, who probably wanted to obtain an estimate of the strength of the Syrian forces and, if possible, dissuade al-Ḥuṣayn from the sacrilege of attacking the Holy City. In the latter he met with no response other than being threatened by al-Ḥuṣayn; but still there does seem to have been some hesitation in commencing hostile operations in the sacred precincts, for actual fighting did not start until the 13 Ṣafar.⁴

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1. Ansāb, IVB, p. 96.
 2. Ṭabarī, V, p. 496.
 3. Ansāb, *ibid.*, p. 47.
 4. *ibid.*

On this day Ibn-az-Zubayr came out of the city to confront the enemy, having been reminded by al-Mukhtār b. 'Ubayd-Allāh ath-Thaqafī of the Qur'ānic verse:

'And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers.'¹

The fighting was intense, his brother, Mundhir b. az-Zubayr, being among the first of those slain,² and he, too, almost lost his life when his mule stumbled while he was retreating. He was saved, however, by the heroic efforts of Misawwar b. Makhruma and Muṣ'ab b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf az-Zuhayrī, both of whom were slain in the fierce fighting that ensued. Nevertheless, the Ḥijāzi army was routed, and Ibn-az-Zubayr realised that he was not strong enough to meet the Syrians again in open battle. Operations were now limited to skirmishes and forays, in which he himself took a prominent part. Indeed, he challenged al-Ḥuṣayn b. Namīr to personal combat, but was refused.³

Although besieged, the defenders of Mecca were in a better position than the enemy, who was experiencing difficulty in finding food and fodder. Al-Ḥuṣayn's efforts to entice them into pitched battles were in vain, even

1. Qur'ān, 2:191.
2. Ibn-Khayyāt, p. 225.
3. ibid., p. 320.

though at one point he had the Ka'ba set ablaze and bombarded with siege weapons, intending thereby to provoke a response from the Meccans.¹ Despite this, Ibn-az-Zubayr did not depart from his strategy of harassing the Syrians by sudden raids on their lines by small parties who would then immediately retreat to the security of the city. This type of warfare was demoralising to the Syrians, and when on the 14 Rabi' al-Awwal the news of Yazid's death reached the camp, the siege was lifted at once.

As is to be expected, accounts differ as to how this first siege of Mecca ended. Ad-Dinawari says that the news of Yazid's death first reached al-Husayn, who then sent word to Ibn-az-Zubayr that he was withdrawing because the lord for whom he was fighting was no longer alive.² Al-Waqidi, as reported by at-Tabari, tells us that it was Ibn-az-Zubayr who first received the news; whereupon he informed the Syrians that they were fighting for a dead man.³ In al-Baladhuri it is said that when the Medinese heard of Yazid's death in the middle of Rabi' al-Awwal they refused to be led in prayer by his wali and appointed

1. Tabari, V, pp. 497-98. Pro-Umayyad accounts, however, maintain that the fire was caused accidentally by Ibn-az-Zubayr's faction when a spark from a camp-fire set the covering alight (Tabari, *ibid.*, p. 499).
2. Tiwal, p. 277.
3. Tabari, *ibid.*, p. 501.

another in his place, at the same time sending a message with the news to Ibn-az-Zubayr.¹ More colourful is the story told by Ibn-‘Abd-Rabbih: Ibn-az-Zubayr told his companions that one of the stones bombarding the Ka‘ba would contain a message, and it was in this way that he learned of the death of Yazīd.²

The probable sequence of events is that, the news having reached Medina, the people of that city revolted and appointed their own wālī, and then informed Ibn-az-Zubayr, the message reaching him on the 1 Rabi‘ ath-Thānī. Thereupon he sent word to the Syrians, but they thought this was a trick and continued the siege. It was only when al-Ḥuṣayn's friend, Thābit b. Qays,³ assured him that Yazīd was really dead that he opened negotiations for a truce. This date, however, is not certain, for a version in the Ansāb holds that it was not until the sixty-fourth day after the death of Yazīd that the news reached Mecca, whereupon the Syrians returned to Damascus.

In the negotiations between Ibn-az-Zubayr and al-Ḥuṣayn at the time of the disengagement, the latter invited him to return to Damascus with the Syrian army, offering his support in the struggle for the Caliphate. Ibn-az-Zubayr thought it prudent to remain in Ḥijāz, where he had assured

1. Ansāb, IVB, p. 51.

2. ‘Iqd, IV, p. 392.

3. Bidāya, VIII, p. 226.

support, rather than venture into the unknown territory to the north, and for this decision he has been criticised by certain modern historians. Amīr 'Alī¹ and Muḥammad an-Najjār² think that, had he accepted al-Ḥuṣayn's proposal, he would have crushed Umayyad resistance and secured the Caliphate for himself; whereas Wellhausen³ believes that to have done so would have been to risk losing the basis of what power he already possessed. It is true that the struggle between Yazīd and Ibn-az-Zubayr can be seen as a contest between Syria and Ḥijāz for the control of Islām in its political dimension, and, in this respect, for Ibn-az-Zubayr to have accepted al-Ḥuṣayn's offer would have been to abandon the cause on which he had built up his following in the homelands. However, when one realises that Ḥijāz at this period was already a backwater in the new economic and political order, poor in resources and manpower, the hope of maintaining it in the same position it held at the time of the first expansions must be seen as illusory, and it would clearly have served Ibn-az-Zubayr's ambitions to seek the support of the tribes of Syria which at this time, divided as they were by the rivalries between Qays and Kalb, were in need of the strong and determined leadership which he could offer. It is, of course, merely speculation to attempt to determine what the

1. Mukhtaṣar, I, p. 75.
2. Ad-Dawla al-Umawiyya, p. 71.
3. Wellhausen, *ibid.*, p. 167.

outcome might have been, but it is not improbable that, but for his hesitation at this time, the Caliphate might have passed forever out of the hands of the Umayyads.

The historians are not unaware of the dilemma which confronted Ibn-az-Zubayr on this occasion, and they seek to explain the reasons for the decision at which he arrived. Foremost in his mind, they tell us, was the memory of what had happened to al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī when he left Ḥijāz to seek the support of 'strangers', and he felt that the same could happen to him. Moreover, he was on principle committed to consulting his peers on matters of this kind, and naturally all those round him had a special interest in maintaining the prestige and importance of Ḥijāz and would advise him accordingly. Inevitably, the fact that the Syrians had bombarded the Ka'ba was produced as an argument that no trust could be placed in the promises of men who would commit such an act.

The fluid nature of the political situation at this time is well shown by the behaviour of al-Ḥusayn b. Namīr, who was himself in an ambiguous position as the commander of an army that no longer had a political purpose or political leadership. In fact, we are told that, after Ibn-az-Zubayr had refused his offer, he made the same proposal to 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, only to meet with another refusal.¹ His return with the army to Damascus² was in

1. Ansāb, IVB, p. 52.

2. Tabarī, V, p. 503.

some respects a venture into a situation the outcome of which could well have been dangerous for him, and ultimately he committed himself to the cause of Marwān b. al-Hakam.

CHAPTER FOUR

'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR AS CALIPH

I. The bay'a to Ibn-az-Zubayr in Hijāz

The succession of the minor, Mu'āwiya b. Yazīd, and his death a few months afterwards, left the Caliphate without an occupant, and it was in this virtual interregnum in the year 64 A.H. that the people of Hijāz took the oath of allegiance to Ibn-az-Zubayr.¹ Again he pretended that he was not actively seeking office and was content to accept the verdict of the community; but since the two local leaders who might have had a claim equal to his own - Musawwar b. Makhruma and Muṣ'ab b. 'Abd-ar-Rahmān - had died in the siege of Mecca, there was no longer anyone to dispute the leadership with him.²

His principle 'No rule but that of God' seems at one time to have won him support from the Mawālī and the Khawārij, but this was lost when they found that they were to be given no say in the choice of the Caliph. A group of the Khawārij known as the Azāriqa were led by their egalitarian principles to declare that they were prepared to support him in all but his ambitions for the Caliphate,

1. Shifā', pp. 169-70.

2. Bidāya, VIII, pp. 245-46; Ibn-Khayyāṭ, p. 321.

and when they received no assurances on this matter they began outright hostilities, attacking the caravans bringing money and materials to Ibn-az-Zubayr from al-Bahrayn.¹ However, once he had become Caliph he appointed 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Jaḥdham al-Fihri as his governor in Egypt, and it is to be noted that the troops he led here consisted mainly of Khawārij, showing that not all of these were of the same opinion as the Azāriqa.²

When he declared his candidacy for the office of Caliph, he at once found himself involved in disputes among Banū Hāshim. He was supported by 'Abd-Allāh b. al-Ḥusayn and 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far, and opposed by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya and 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar chose to remain neutral, replying that he would only declare his support when the issue had been finally settled according to the will of the people.³

One noticeable defect in Ibn-az-Zubayr's strategy at this time lay in the way he sought support only in Ḥijāz, neglecting the other provinces which were at this time in a confused condition and probably ready to accept a strong, legitimate leader. He made efforts to win the support of the Medinese, which would surely have been given to him

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 611; Ansāb, IVB, pp. 59-60; Bidāya, VIII, p. 239.

2. Ibn-Taghrī-Birdī, Nujūm, I, p. 165.

3. Ansāb, V, pp. 188-97; Ibn-Khayyāṭ, p. 330.

anyway in default of any serious rival, and among his first acts as Caliph was the appointment of his brother 'Ubayd as 'āmil in this city.¹

Mecca now became the capital of those Muslim lands under the control of Ibn-az-Zubayr, and he signalled his own supreme executive position by appointing a wālī for this city, his son 'Abbād (or 'Abd-ar-Rahmān), with the duty of maintaining order and carrying out the edicts of his father.² One of the first tasks the new Caliph set his hand to was the rebuilding of the Ka'ba and, indeed, of the whole of the sacred precincts, all of which had been seriously damaged during the siege. The Black Stone itself had been damaged in three places.³

However, not everyone approved of this restoration. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās is reported to have said, 'I fear that your successors will keep modifying it, and it will therefore gradually lose the respect of the people. My advice is that you restore only those parts which have suffered damage, and retain in its original state the House where Islām was first born.' To this Ibn-az-Zubayr replied, 'My aunt 'Ā'isha told me that the Prophet once said, 'Had the Quraysh not so recently accepted Islām there, it was my

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 622.
2. *ibid.*; Ansāb, V, p. 202.
3. Ṣaḥīḥ, I, pp. 590-91; Azraqī, pp. 138-50; Ṭabarī, *ibid.*

intention to reconstruct the Ka'ba as the shrine of the Prophet Ibrāhīm. For when the Quraysh originally built it, the dimensions were reduced by six or seven adhru' due to lack of funds. I wanted to open a new entrance on the eastern side and an exit on the western.'¹ Still Ibn-az-Zubayr felt some misgivings about making alterations to the holiest site in Islām. For three days he remained in solitude, praying to God for guidance, and afterwards he consulted seventy shaykhs of the Quraysh.² The people of Mecca, and notably Ibn-'Abbās, feared a visitation of divine wrath if hands were laid on the House of God, and some, in fact, fled the city. Ibn-az-Zubayr himself had to initiate the work of demolition before others would dare to join in. A request was made for negroes from Abyssinia to do the major part of the dismantlement, for there was a hadīth which ran: 'The Ka'ba will be destroyed by two thin-legged negroes from Abyssinia.'³ The work took place in either 64 or 65 A.H.⁴

All the jewels and other valuables were transferred to the home of Ibn-az-Zubayr while the building work was in progress. Some notion may be gained of the reverence shown to the Ka'ba by the dispute which arose when the

1. Azraqī, pp. 141-50.
2. Murūj, V, p. 193.
3. Azraqī, p. 142.
4. Ṭabarī, V, p. 622; Ṭiwāl, pp. 287-88.

Black Stone had to be replaced in the new structure. Ibn-az-Zubayr ordered his son 'Abbād to position it, but some of the people disagreed. They recalled that when the Quraysh first built the Ka'ba there had been violent argument among them as to who should have the honour of placing the Stone in position. While the dispute was going on, the Prophet, at that time a boy of eighteen, chanced to enter the holy place, and they agreed to let him act as arbiter. He instructed a member from each of the clans to hold a side of the cloth on which the Stone rested and to lift it to the site it was to occupy. He then, with his own hands, fixed it in position. It was by this act that he gained the title al-Amīn. Despite this precedent, Ibn-az-Zubayr refused to let the Quraysh share in the operation on this occasion.¹

The craftsmen who worked on the new building were Persians and Greeks, and no other reference is made to the Abyssinian negroes. For the first time stone was used, and mosaic craftsmen were brought from the Yaman to provide the surface ornamentation. The Stone, which had been broken into three pieces, was encased in a frame of silver. The new building was twenty-seven adhru' high and eighteen adhru' wide; and on completion was seven adhru' longer than the old structure, with two doors, one an entrance and the other an exit.² The area of the site was also

1. Azraqī, p. 106; Ya'qūbī, III, p. 7.

2. Azraqī, pp. 145, 345; Ansāb, V, p. 202; Ibn-Khayyāt, p. 327; Tiwāl, p. 288.

increased: the low wall which had previously surrounded it was demolished, along with some adjacent houses in there, and a new wall built, incorporating a colonnade.¹ It was completed in Rajab, 65 A.H., and Ibn-az-Zubayr was satisfied that the new Ka'ba was as the Prophet had intended it to be.

He inaugurated the ceremonies on the 17 Rajab by performing the 'little hajj', starting from at-Tan'im (a place about two farāsikh from Mecca, between the hills Na'im and Nā'im, in a wādī called Nu'mān). This place marks the boundary of the Ḥaram, and had been used by the Prophet himself as a starting-point for the 'umra.² About one hundred animals were sacrificed for the occasion, each of those participating contributing what he could afford.³ Henceforth, the 17 Rajab became the traditional time for the performance of the 'umra, even the people today leaving town and returning on this day to have the status of pilgrims to the House of God.⁴

In Mecca new wells were dug and the existing ones improved, one of these being the well of 'Arafāt in the suburbs.⁵ Money was coined, and for the first time a

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1. Shifā', p. 133.
 2. Bakrī, Mu'jam, I, p. 321.
 3. Azraqī, p. 203.
 4. Mu'jam, ibid.
 5. Shifā', ibid.

round dirham was struck instead of the former square pieces, with the inscription 'Muḥammad is the Prophet of God' on the obverse and 'God ordered men to be loyal and just' on the reverse. There is no evidence that Ibn-az-Zubayr issued coins bearing his own name in 61 A.H., as stated by Jurjī Zaydān on the weak authority of Jawdat Pāshā, the earliest known being of the year 65 A.H. According to Ibn-Khaldūn, Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr issued dirhams in 70 A.H. when he was wālī of 'Irāq, bearing on one side the inscription 'Barakat Allah' and on the other 'Bi-smi 'llāh'.¹

Medina suffered greatly in the conflict between Ibn-az-Zubayr and the Umayyads, often having to endure near-famine conditions. There is some confusion in the sources as to the identity of the wulāt who governed here on behalf of Ibn-az-Zubayr, the names Jābir b. al-Aswad, 'Ubayd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, Muṣ'ab b. az-Zubayr, Ibn-Abī-Thawr al-Ḥārith b. Ḥaṭīb, Wahb b. Mu'tib and a certain Abū-Qays being mentioned.² Of these, 'Ubayd-Allāh was the brother of Ibn-az-Zubayr and held the post in 65 A.H., being replaced by another brother, Muṣ'ab, who is mentioned as being in office in 66 A.H.³ It would also appear that 'Abbās b. Sahl and Mundhir b. az-Zubayr were wālīs in Medina at some time or another.

1. Nujūm, I, p. 176; Muqaddima, pp. 206-7.
2. Ansāb, V, p. 189.
3. Ṭabarī, V, p. 622; Bidāya, VIII, p. 20.

The reasons for this frequent change of governors may be looked for in the uncertain political situation, for such influential figures as 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, and 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās had still refused to give the bay'a to Ibn-az-Zubayr. It was essential, therefore, that he be represented here by someone of unswerving loyalty who had also the political skill to treat with such potential opposition. For Medina was a key position in the new state, being on the main road to Damascus from where armies could be sent to raid into Umayyad territory, and it could not be allowed to deteriorate too greatly. Nevertheless, there was a constant shortage of food, and this was not to be alleviated for ten years.

II. Conditions in Syria

Mu'āwiya b. Yazīd held the Caliphate for no longer than three months, and some accounts speak of his death as an assassination.¹ Immediately following this, certain pretenders to the Caliphate appeared on the scene: Walīd b. 'Utba, the former wālī of Medina, ventured to lead the prayers, but he was struck down by a spear and eventually died of his wounds. Another former wālī of Medina, 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Sufyān, also sought to succeed to the throne, but his efforts met with no success, and he finally left Damascus and joined Ibn-az-Zubayr in Mecca.²

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 503-31; Bidāya, VIII, pp. 237-38.

2. Ibn-Khayyāt, p. 321.

Due to the efforts of Mu'āwīya I to eliminate rivals to his son Yazīd, other members of the Umayyad clan had not been allowed to achieve any prominence and, consequently, were little known by the people of Syria. At this time it cannot be said that Umayyad prestige was as high in Syria as it was later to become, while in 'Irāq and Egypt the clan had little, if any, support. Such notables as Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, who were actually resident in Hijāz, were hated by the local people because of the support they had given Yazīd. It would seem that there was a mass exodus of Umayyads from the region, al-Balādhurī putting the number as high as four thousand;¹ and we are told, too, that Ibn-az-Zubayr ordered his general Ibn-Muṭī' to expel members of the clan after the siege of Mecca. Large numbers of them left for Syria with al-Ḥuṣayn b. Namīr when he returned with his army, among them the future Caliphs, Marwān and his son 'Abd-al-Malik.²

The fact that at this time al-Ḥuṣayn b. Namīr did not propose that any of these Umayyads should enter a claim for the Caliphate may be taken as indicating that only the branch of Abū-Sufyān enjoyed any support in Syria, the other branches of the clan being unknown. Yet there was criticism among the followers of Ibn-az-Zubayr of his having allowed such potential enemies - in particular, Marwān - to escape to Syria, and he ordered Ibn-Muṭī' to go forth and bring them back. By the time he reached them, however, they had already

1. Ansāb, IVB, pp. 136-37; V, p. 126.

2. 'Abd-al-Malik was recovering from smallpox (jadarī). See *ibid.*, V, p. 126.

entered Syrian territory, and they refused to return with him. Thereupon, Ibn-az-Zubayr contented himself with confiscating all their properties in Ḥijāz,¹ still adhering to the fallacious notion that this was the central region of the new state and that his domination here would assure him control of all the other territories. In accordance with this view, he was concerned to eliminate all traces of an Umayyad presence in his home territories.

The death of Mu'āwiya II and the confusion about his successor created an ideal opportunity for Marwān once he arrived in Damascus, for he had coveted the Caliphate for himself from as long ago as the African campaign of 27 A.H. in which he had participated. Ibn-'Abd-al-Ḥakam relates the story that a Christian monk had at this time predicted that he would one day be the Caliph ruling over the Holy Land.² His behaviour at the Battle of the Camel also disclosed ambitions to this dignity,³ just as his efforts to persuade 'Amr b. 'Uthmān to claim the Caliphate for himself after the murder of his father were directed against the pretensions of Mu'āwiya I.⁴ He, too, joined in the protest when the latter tried to win the bay'a for his son Yazīd.

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 530.

2. Futūḥ Ifrīqiyā, p. 52.

3. See Chapter Two of the present thesis.

4. Nizā', p. 53.

Now, with Walīd b. 'Utba dead and 'Uthmān b. Muḥammad b. Abī-Sufyān a refugee in Ḥijāz, there were only two credible Umayyad contenders for the Caliphate, Marwān and Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ, for the sons of Yazīd, 'Abd-Allāh and Khālīd, were still minors and were consequently unacceptable in terms of tribal convention.¹ Moreover, Khālīd, who enjoyed some support from his relatives in Banū Kalb, was opposed by Banū Qays led by aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk, a state of tension which seems to have been deliberately fostered by Mu'āwīya as part of his tribal policy. Indeed, even in Syria, Ibn-az-Zubayr had the support of many regions, being regarded as a man of mature judgment and prudent behaviour whose descent in the line of Abū-Bakr established him in the aristocracy of Islām, and it only needed his presence there to create a strong movement in support of his claim.

In Ḥimṣ he was favoured as Caliph by an-Nu'mān b. Bashīr, who had led the delegation to Ḥijāz in seeking support for Yazīd and had been deeply impressed by his qualities. In Qinnasrīn Zufār b. al-Ḥārith al-Kilābī, who had also been present in this delegation, declared in favour of Ibn-az-Zubayr, and in Palestine, too, there were others of the same attitude. In fact, with the exception of Jordan, most of Syria held partisans for his cause.² In Damascus, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk had been leading the prayers and

1. Tiwāl, p. 249.

2. Tabarī, V, pp. 531-36.

was actively urging the people to decide on a new Caliph. For some reason not disclosed, his relations with Ibn-az-Zubayr were at first not friendly, yet he could not bring himself to accept Khālīd b. Yazīd because of the hostilities between Banū Kalb and Banū Qays. *apart from any question of Khālīd's age* Ultimately he agreed to support Ibn-az-Zubayr and brought Damascus, too, into his camp.

Marwān, seeing the way events were developing, was prepared to go to Ḥijāz and pay homage to Ibn-az-Zubayr, hoping to have restored to the Umayyads their properties which had been confiscated there. At this juncture, ‘Ubayd-Allāh b. Ziyād, the wālī of Yazīd in ‘Irāq, arrived in Damascus, having failed to win the bay‘a for himself in that province. He immediately began a campaign in support of Marwān, using the money he had brought with him from the treasury of Basra to bribe the influential leaders and to buy food for distribution among the people. The followers of aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk also benefited from the largesse he was dispensing.¹

Encouraged by this turn in his fortunes, Marwān sought to increase his support by marrying the mother of Khālīd and thereby assuring himself of the support of Banū Kalb. At the Battle of Marj Rāḥiṭ aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk and an-Nu‘mān lost their lives, thereby depriving Ibn-az-Zubayr of their influence among the tribes of Qays; indeed, there remained no single survivor of the anṣār after this battle, the true

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 505-41.

nature of which was to decide whether Kalb or Qays was to dominate in Syria. With the passing of these powerful partisans, the support for Ibn-az-Zubayr in the region dwindled and disappeared, leaving Marwān unchallenged. It is consistent with Ibn-az-Zubayr's limited political vision that he did not even attempt to go to 'Irāq at this time and use it as another base for his war against Syria; indeed, too, he merely stood by when the armies of Marwān moved into Egypt and deprived him of that province.¹

Marwān died suddenly in 65 A.H.,² having reigned for only nine months, but in this brief period he succeeded in having the bay'a made to his son 'Abd-al-Malik. Despite the fact that the troops of Ibn-az-Zubayr were able to take advantage of the new situation, occupying Palestine and advancing as far as the outskirts of Damascus, in reality a wholly new phase of the struggle had commenced, which he was slow to recognise.

III. Conditions in 'Irāq

When 'Ubayd-Allāh b. Ziyād failed to win support for himself in 'Irāq after the death of Yazīd and fled to Damascus with the treasury,³ the tribes in the region were left leaderless, returning to their former feuding among

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 610; Ansāb, V, p. 148.

2. Murūj, V, pp. 206-7.

3. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 504; Bayān, II, p. 53;
Ibn-Khayyāṭ, p. 324.

themselves. The anarchy awoke a feeling of disquiet among the people of Kufa and Basra, and when a certain individual named Salama b. Dhuwayb¹ proposed that they should recognise Ibn-az-Zubayr as Caliph they agreed readily. In this, no doubt, they were influenced as much by their hostility towards the Umayyads as by any feeling of attachment to him, and it would require his actual physical presence to consolidate the support of this region.

In Basra, the people chose Anas b. Mālik² to lead them in prayer, which is to say to act as the wālī, and they wrote asking for Ibn-az-Zubayr's permission to have him confirmed in this function. To this he agreed, but after forty days he replaced him with 'Amr b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Mu'ammār, who in turn was shortly to be replaced by al-Hārith b. 'Abd-Allāh b. Rabī'a al-Makhzūmī.

In Kufa, the people chose 'Āmir b. Mas'ūd³ as their wālī, and they too gained the consent of Ibn-az-Zubayr for their choice. This action by the people of the two centres of 'Irāq was prompted by their anxiety to put an end to the intolerable tribal feuding, and the recognition they were prepared to accord to Ibn-az-Zubayr was based on no deeply-felt loyalty. He, for his part, made no move which might produce a genuine feeling in his favour.

1. Tabarī, V, p. 507.
2. *ibid.*, p. 528.
3. *ibid.*, p. 529.

The first important policy decision affecting 'Irāq which Ibn-az-Zubayr was obliged to make arose from the activities of the tawwābūn ('penitents') in Kufa.¹ These were al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī's former adherents, who wished to exact vengeance for his murder at Karbalā'. They believed that their martyred leader and Ibn-az-Zubayr had been fighting for the same cause, and they now seemed prepared to look to the latter to give their movement direction.

The group emerged shortly after the massacre at Karbalā', led by a certain Sulaymān b. Ṣurd, and they had already begun to build up a store of weapons in secret. When Ibn-az-Zubayr's wālī in Kufa, 'Abd-Allāh b. Yazīd, learned of their activities, he addressed them in the mosque, declaring his own sorrow over the murder of al-Ḥusayn and cautioning them that they should not vent their exasperation on him or cause any disturbance, which could only be of benefit to the Umayyads, the real agents of the murder and their common enemy. Thus he secured their support in the battle against 'Ubayd-Allāh b. Ziyād, the Umayyad general at the head of the army sent to recover 'Irāq for 'Abd-al-Malik.²

The attitude of Ibn-az-Zubayr at this time is marked by the same ambiguity that characterises most of his policies. Influenced by reports from Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa which presented the tawwābūn merely as a

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 583.

2. ibid., pp. 561-62; Ansāb, V, p. 204.

revolutionary group, he dismissed Ibn-Yazīd and replaced him with 'Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī'.¹

At this juncture, there emerged on the scene al-Mukhtār b. Abī-'Ubayd-Allāh b. Mas'ūd ath-Thaqafī who, with the help of his uncle Sa'd b. Mas'ūd,² the former wālī of al-Madā'in in the time of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, was seeking to gain control of Kufa and, ultimately, the whole province of 'Irāq. Al-Mukhtār himself had witnessed all the major events in the Muslim state from the murder of 'Uthmān to the Battle of the Camel, and he had fought on the side of al-Ḥusayn at Karbalā'. His wife was 'Amra, the daughter of an-Nu'mān b. Bashīr, who at one time had been wālī of Kufa, and his sister Ṣafiyya was married to 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar.³ Thus connected, he enjoyed particular prestige in the Muslim community. He sought an alliance with Ibn-az-Zubayr after being expelled from 'Irāq for the part he played in support of al-Ḥusayn, but he did not meet with the warm welcome he expected as an enemy of the Umayyads. After spending a year in at-Ṭā'if,⁴ he once again made overtures to Ibn-az-Zubayr, seeking the position of mentor and counsellor. He fought alongside him at the first siege of Mecca, and so distinguished himself that Ibn-az-Zubayr is reported to have

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 575-622.

2. He was an orphan (see Ansāb, V, pp. 214-63).

3. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 571; Ansāb, *ibid.*, p. 215.

4. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 573.

said, 'If al-Mukhtār fights on my side, I would not hesitate to fight anyone.'¹

After the death of Yazīd, he returned to Kufa, where he tried to win the support of the tawwābūn, secretly spreading the story that Ibn-az-Zubayr, who had previously wanted Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya to be Caliph, was now unjustly claiming the dignity for himself.² He sought to undermine the influence of Sulaymān b. Ṣurd so that he might himself gain the leadership of the 'Alid faction; and when the new wālī of Kufa, 'Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī', announced that Ibn-az-Zubayr had instructed him to govern according to the principles of 'Umar and 'Uthmān, he protested that affairs should be managed as 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib had done. In the meanwhile, he was sending messages to Ibn-az-Zubayr accusing 'Abd-Allāh b. Muṭī' of leniency towards the Umayyads and explaining that he felt obliged to oppose him for this reason. Ibn-az-Zubayr was thus misled as to the true state of affairs in 'Irāq, and seems to have regarded al-Mukhtār as a loyal servant. Yet, when he appointed 'Amr b. 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām 'āmil of Kufa, al-Mukhtār continued to prevent him from even assuming office.³

1. ' Ṭabarī, V, p. 573.

2. Ibn-Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, V, p. 72.

3. *ibid.*, pp. 70, 72-73.

There were now three forces engaged in the struggle for the control of 'Irāq: the Zubayrids, the 'Alids, and the Mukhtarites. At the Battle of 'Ayn al-Warda,¹ 'Ubayd-Allāh b. Ziyād broke the power of the tawwābūn and killed their leader, Sulaymān b. Ṣurd, and after this al-Mukhtār was able to exercise a dominant rôle in Kufa. He hoped to gain additional support by advocating the cause of the non-Arab Mawālī, presenting himself as the champion of their rights in the community and declaring 'Those who come to us as slaves are free',² while at the same time assuming the rôle formerly played by Sulaymān b. Ṣurd as leader of the 'Alid faction. Moreover, his position had a legal status because of the authority given to him by Ibn-az-Zubayr.

In 66 A.H.³ he decided he was at last strong enough to openly challenge Ibn-az-Zubayr, and he sent a force to capture Medina, ostensibly acting in the cause of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, whom Ibn-az-Zubayr had exiled to Medina. In a letter to Muḥammad he actually refers to Ibn-az-Zubayr as al-mulhid, 'the heretic', and protests that he is only acting on his (Muḥammad's) behalf. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, however, seemed to reject his support, saying that if he wished to wage war he already had sufficient support. With

1. Ṭabarī, V, p. 596.
2. Ansāb, V, p. 267.
3. Ṭabarī, VI, p. 75.

the hostility between himself and Ibn-az-Zubayr now brought out into the open, al-Mukhtār turned for support to Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, but he too declined to be dragged into the warfare, while Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya maintained a non-committal attitude.¹ Nevertheless, this silence on the part of the latter was interpreted by Ibn-az-Zubayr as support for al-Mukhtār, and he insisted that he should no longer refuse to make the bay'a to him. It is said that Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya was so worried by this that he actually thought at one time of moving to Kufa, but he was rightly suspicious of the intentions of al-Mukhtār and, in the end, remained in Ḥijāz.²

At this time Basra, which was the gateway to 'Irāq, did not hold the same importance as Kufa in the eyes of al-Mukhtār and was allowed to become a centre for such fanatics as the extremist Khārijites. Also, the people of Kufa who were in opposition to al-Mukhtār, and especially those whose slaves had been liberated by him, moved here and sought the help of the wālī, Mus'ab b. az-Zubayr, who had been appointed by his brother in 67 A.H.³ Because of the position held by al-Mukhtār in Kufa, he was obliged to use Basra as his capital, and from here he prepared for the inevitable struggle.

1. Ibn-Sa'd, V, p. 109.

2. Ansāb, V, pp. 269-70; 'Uyūn, II, p. 201.

3. Tabarī, VI, p. 93; Ansāb, *ibid.*, p. 155.

Within four months the armies of Muṣ'ab had defeated and killed al-Mukhtār,¹ and the whole of 'Irāq was now Zubayrid territory. The failure of al-Mukhtār to achieve his ambitions can be attributed to his lack of firm support from any of the important groups in Islām at that time. He sought alliances with the 'Alids as well as the Khārijites, and when it seemed to favour his cause he was even prepared to present himself as a Zubayrite; in fact, he was no more than a political opportunist and was probably recognised as such by those whose help he sought. This was certainly clear to the historians of the period who report that shortly before his death he confessed to a certain aṣ-Ṣā'ib b. Mālīk al-Ash'arī, 'I saw 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr holding Ḥijāz, 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān in possession of Syria, and a man like Najda al-Ḥarrūrī strong in the Yamāmā. I am also an Arab and I wished to fulfil my ambitions by taking the land of 'Irāq.'²

Once the menace from al-Mukhtār had passed, Ibn-az-Zubayr replaced Muṣ'ab by his own son Ḥamza.³ In this he was probably influenced to some degree by the practices of the Umayyads and was seeking, no less than they were, to establish a dynastic principle in his own line by elevating his son to a position of prominence. Moreover, his brother

1. Ṭabarī, VI, p. 118.

2. Ṭiwāl, p. 307; Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 107; Ansāb, V, p. 261.

3. Balādhurī, Futūḥ, pp. 375-76; Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 118.

Muṣ'ab was married to Sukayna, the daughter of al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī,¹ and his other wife was 'Ā'isha, the granddaughter of Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubayd-Allāh; and thereby he was related to two families each of which had as strong a claim to leadership in the Islāmic community as Ibn-az-Zubayr himself.² But, above all, Muṣ'ab was an old friend of 'Abd-al-Malik; after the death of al-Mukhtār, a correspondence between the two began, and this excited the suspicions of Ibn-az-Zubayr.³

The total inadequacy of Ḥamza as a governor is illustrated by several anecdotes in the sources, and it became clear to Ibn-az-Zubayr that he could not be entrusted with so important a province as 'Irāq, where he had actually roused the antagonism of the people of Basra. Consequently, in 68 A.H. he reinstated Muṣ'ab,⁴ who had to repair the damage which had been done by his nephew. One of his first acts was to increase the stipends ('aṭā) of the people to two a year, hoping in this way to influence them in favour of his brother.⁵ Ibn-az-Zubayr, however, is presented as still being ambiguous in his attitude to 'Irāq, and is said to have told a delegation sent from here by his brother to

1. Ya'qūbī, III, p. 11.
2. Aghānī, III, pp. 361-63.
3. 'Uyūn, III, p. 258; Ansāb, V, p. 285.
4. Ṭabarī, VI, pp. 117-19.
5. *ibid.*, p. 150.

express their loyalty, 'I would rather have one man from Syria than ten from 'Irāq.'¹ This could only increase the difficulties of Muṣ'ab, who had to reunite the people of the province after the divisions which had been created by al-Mukhtār and Ḥamza, and to quell the activities of the extremist Khārijites. With the support of al-Muhallab b. Abī-Ṣufra, he succeeded in holding them in check for three years, during which time he concentrated on building up an army which would be capable of meeting the Syrians in the field.²

IV. 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr and
'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān

With the accession of 'Abd-al-Malik to power in Syria, the position of the Umayyads as the leaders of the Islāmic state was to be secured beyond serious challenge from any quarter for over half a century. In Syria he continued to secure for himself the support of the powerful Kalb confederation, despite the fact that previously they had been trying to wrest the power from the descendants of Yazīd. The political divisions of Islām at this time are illustrated by the situation at the Pilgrimage of 68 A.H.³ when four different groups unfurled their flags on 'Arafāt: the faction of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya, the faction of Najda al-Ḥarrūrī, Banū Umayya and the faction of Ibn-az-Zubayr.

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1. Bayān, I, pp. 241-42; 'Uyūn, III, p. 132.
 2. Ṭabarī, VI, p. 127.
 3. ibid., pp. 138-39.

Each of these had to be brought into submission if 'Abd-al-Malik was to effect the unification of the Islāmic world under his own leadership.

He had somehow to play down the sacred character of Mecca, which was firmly in the hands of Ibn-az-Zubayr, and thus he sought to give a new interpretation to the hadīth 'Jerusalem is equal to Mecca and Medina in religious importance'. People were urged to visit this city, and much propaganda was expended on the sanctity of the Holy Rock from which the Prophet had made his ascent to Heaven and over which 'Abd-al-Malik built the famous mosque Qubbat aṣ-Ṣakhra. In this he was actually emulating the example of Ibn-az-Zubayr, who had rebuilt the Ka'ba in Mecca, but in effect he was splitting the Islāmic community by offering them an alternative focus for their devotion. Indeed, he did not dare to let pilgrims go to Mecca for fear that Ibn-az-Zubayr might demand the bay'a from them, and he contrived to organise a ritual about the visit to the Dome of the Rock that was in some respects similar to the hajj and could satisfy the demands of the people for this form of religious expression.¹

Politically, the Muslim community was divided much as it had been in the period of the struggle between Mu'āwīya and 'Alī. While 'Abd-al-Malik held power in Syria and Egypt, Ibn-az-Zubayr was recognised as Amīr-al-Mu'minīn in Hijāz, 'Irāq and Khurāsān, with Banū Hāshim maintaining a

1. Ya'qūbī, III, p. 8.

neutral position. Indeed, until his death in 68 A.H.,¹ 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Abbās remained in aṭ-Ṭā'if, refusing to give the bay'a to Ibn-az-Zubayr; and 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Umar behaved exactly as he had in the previous contest for power, withholding his support until there was a consensus among the Muslims as to who should be their Caliph, which in effect meant that he was not going to commit himself until a clear victor emerged.²

'Abd-al-Malik, realising that the most serious challenge to his position came from Ibn-az-Zubayr, effected a truce with Byzantium and put in order all the affairs of the territories under his control.³ By 70 A.H.⁴ he finally felt himself strong and secure enough to carry the war to the enemy; and the first region to receive his attention was 'Irāq where, after the defeat of al-Mukhtār, Muṣ'ab was collecting an army to be used against Syria.

'Abd-al-Malik instructed his lieutenant, al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf ath-Thaqafī, to burn down the houses of all who refused to join his army, and, in general, purged his domains of Zubayrid elements; he sent spies and agents to foment dissatisfaction in 'Irāq, and it is probable, too, that he was behind much of the tribal feuding that was going on here. Despite the efforts of Muṣ'ab, dissension broke

1. Murūj, V, p. 231.
2. Bayān, I, pp. 241-42.
3. Tabarī, VI, p. 150.
4. Tiwāl, pp. 310-11.

out within the tribe of Rabī'a, seriously affecting the military efficiency of the 'Irāqī forces; and at the same time there began to proliferate small religious sects and factions, each having also a political attitude which rent the unity of the region.¹ It needed the physical presence of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr to bring together the disparate and incompatible groups under a common purpose, but, as ever, he refused to leave the sanctuary of Hijāz and thereby deprived the 'Irāqīs of a visible leader such as 'Abd-al-Malik was to the Syrians. Thus the leaders of each group and faction were open to Umayyad propaganda, and it is recorded that letters were sent to them urging them to abandon Muṣ'ab. This disturbed state of affairs in 'Irāq contrasts notably with the stability 'Abd-al-Malik had achieved in Syria.

Those sections of the tribe of Rabī'a located in northern 'Irāq showed little inclination to resist the incursions made by the Syrian forces, probably being still resentful of the victory Muṣ'ab had won over al-Mukhtār, whom they had supported. Twice in the years 69-70 A.H. such small-scale invasions took place in the north, the army being under the personal command of 'Abd-al-Malik, and in 71 A.H. he led his troops on a campaign against Basra itself. Although this had to be abandoned because of the onset of winter, the two armies finally met in the

1. Tabarī, VI, pp. 156-57.

following year at Dayr al-Jāthaliq.¹ The encounter was disastrous for Muṣ'ab, for no sooner had the enemy been sighted than most of his commanders went over to the side of the Umayyads. 'Abd-al-Malik proposed to Muṣ'ab that if he, too, would come over to him he would retain him as his governor of 'Irāq, but this was refused. In the battle which took place near the river Dujayl on the western bank of the Tigris, both Muṣ'ab and his son 'Isā were slain, and with their passing 'Irāq, also, slipped from the hands of Ibn-az-Zubayr.²

'Abd-al-Malik entered Kufa and received the bay'a from the people, which in fact meant that he controlled all 'Irāq and the lands to the east. Having appointed loyal governors in all the most important places, he returned to Damascus and prepared for the final confrontation with Ibn-az-Zubayr.³

When the news of Muṣ'ab's death reached Ibn-az-Zubayr in Mecca, he is reported to have declared from the pulpit of the mosque, 'Praise be to God in whose hands is the creation and in whose power it is to ordain. He gives what He wishes to whom He wishes. He takes away what He wishes from whom He wishes; He raises and lowers whom He wishes.

1. Al-Jāthaliq was the head of the Jacobite Christians in 'Irāq, under the control of the Patriarch of Antioch (Tiwāl, p. 312; Bayān, I, p. 117).
2. Ṭabarī, VI, pp. 158-60; Murūj, V, p. 249. Muṣ'ab's two loyal officers were killed with him: they were Ibrāhīm b. al-Ashtar and Muslim b. 'Umar, the father of Qutayba b. Muslim al-Bāhili (Bayān, I, p. 260).
3. Ṭabarī, *ibid.*, p. 165.

I have received news from 'Irāq that makes me sad and happy. I am happy because Muṣ'ab died a martyr, but I am sad because I have lost someone dear to me. Today I lost Muṣ'ab, but before him I lost az-Zubayr, and before him 'Uthmān. We do not die in bed as do Banū l-'Āṣ (i.e. the Umayyads), but under the shadow of the sword.¹ In fact, he was now isolated in Ḥijāz, with no resources of manpower or wealth on which he could draw. Even Medina slipped from his grasp: when in 72 A.H.² 'Abd-al-Malik sent Ṭarīq b. 'Amr here as governor, Ṭalḥa b. 'Abd-Allāh b. 'Awf, the wālī of Ibn-az-Zubayr, fled to Mecca.

V. The Second Siege of Mecca

'Abd-al-Malik appears to have been reluctant to launch an attack on the holy city of Mecca in person, and consequently he appointed al-Ḥajjāj to the command of the campaign into Ḥijāz. The fact that Ibn-az-Zubayr had not himself led the army which opposed the Syrian invasion of 'Irāq was to the tribal mentality a mark of cowardice, and 'Abd-al-Malik is recorded as saying, 'Had 'Abd-Allāh really deserved to be Caliph he would have come and faced me instead of hiding in the Ḥaram.'³ In order that it should be seen that his conflict was with Ibn-az-Zubayr only, he

1. Ṭabarī, VI, p. 166.

2. *ibid.*

3. *ibid.*

instructed al-Ḥajjāj to be moderate in the way he conducted operations and, if possible, to surround him in the Ḥaram and starve him into capitulation, without inflicting damage on the sacred precincts.

In the descriptions of the hardships suffered through hunger by the defenders of Mecca, we are told that Ibn-az-Zubayr had to kill his own horse and that chickens were being sold for as much as ten dirhams apiece.¹ This state of affairs continued from Dhū l-Qa'da, 72 A.H. (when Muṣ'ab met his death), to Jumādā I, 73 A.H., during which time Ibn-az-Zubayr was making futile efforts to regain the support of the people of 'Irāq. Obviously he had learned much from his experiences during the first siege of Mecca, and had made preparations such as assuring the security of the two mountains surrounding the city, the control of which was vital to the success of any besieging force.²

By bribery and other financial inducements, al-Ḥajjāj brought about mass desertions from the forces of Ibn-az-Zubayr, the number ten thousand being mentioned, among whom were two of his sons, Ḥamza and Khubayb.³ His other sons remained with their father to the end. Once again we hear that the ruler of Abyssinia sent a small contingent to

1. Fākihī, Muntaqā, p. 20.

2. *ibid.*

3. Ansāb, V, p. 375.

assist in the defence, and also that a group of Khārijites put in an appearance but in the end refused to participate actively because Ibn-az-Zubayr insisted that he was going to his death as a sympathiser of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān.¹

Finally, 'Abd-al-Malik's patience was exhausted, and orders were given that al-Ḥajjāj should turn his siege engines against the Ka'ba. With the water supply cut off and food depleted, the defenders were now in such a hopeless state that they even had to drink the water from the sacred well of Zamzam.² 'Urwa, the brother of Ibn-az-Zubayr, urged him to surrender and come to terms with 'Abd-al-Malik, just as al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī had done with Mu'āwiya; to which he replied that he would prefer to follow the course of al-Ḥusayn and die rather than yield. Neither would he listen to those who advised him to escape; to them his answer was that a dishonourable death would shame him in Paradise in the presence of all those who had died in his cause. As for trying to conciliate 'Abd-al-Malik, that too was out of the question, for an honourable death was better than a life of dishonour.³

One of the final scenes presented to us in the histories had Ibn-az-Zubayr taking his final leave of his aged mother, Asmā', during which he addressed God with the

1. Ansāb, V, p. 375; Bayān, I, p. 177.
2. Muntaqā, p. 27.
3. Murūj, V, p. 202.

words, 'I wanted nothing else but Your love and mercy. I have never done harm intentionally to any Muslim or adherent of Islām.' He was now aware that death was near, and his one concern was that it should be sanctified by the nobility and purity of the cause for which he fought, not personal ambition but the greater glory of Islām.

On the morning of Tuesday, 17 Jumādā I, 73/4 November, 692,¹ Ibn-az-Zubayr died in battle, on his lips the words 'Allah, my wish is to be with You; receive me as You would a martyr.' Al-Ḥajjāj sent his severed head to Damascus, and had his body exposed on a crucifix. At the request of his brother 'Urwa, the body was turned over to the family and buried alongside the house of Ṣafiyya in Mecca.²

While most sources give this as the date of his death, others have the month as Jumādā II, while al-Mas'ūdī has it as the 14 Jumādā II.³ However, he mentions some sources which merely assign the event to the middle of this month. When al-Ḥajjāj entered Mecca and secured the bay'a for 'Abd-al-Malik from the Quraysh, a new phase in Islāmic history commenced, and this is recognised by the historians, who speak of the year 73 as 'ām al-jamā'a, 'the year of unity'.⁴

1. Ṭabarī, VI, pp. 188-89, 191.

2. Muntaqā, p. 17.

3. Murūj, V, p. 265.

4. Ibn-Sa'd, V, p. 170.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE POSITION OF 'ABD-ALLĀH IBN-AZ-ZUBAYR
IN HISTORY

The career of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr throws light on the confused situation in the Islāmic world after the assassination of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, when there began a struggle for the leadership which was not to be resolved until his death in 73 A.H. The expansion of the tribes out of the Arabian peninsula had been initiated and fostered by the energies generated by the new religion, and in all the various regions in which they found themselves as a result this was the unique bond which could give them a unity overriding their traditional separatism. Therefore, whoever could gain acceptance as the spiritual head of the religion would by this same token control the political and military fortunes of the vast territories into which Islām had penetrated. However, each region had its own particular economic and social individuality into which the Arab intruders were soon to be absorbed, and the struggle which ensued can be seen as the attempt of Syria, 'Irāq and Ḥijāz each to assert its claim to be the focal point of the empire.

Ḥijāz, and indeed the whole of the North Arabian peninsula, had been drained of its manpower by the movement northward of the tribes, and what wealth it had previously enjoyed as a result of the caravan trade had been lost

because of the disruptions caused by the constant military activity of the expansion. All that remained to Ḥijāz that would give it a claim to primacy in the empire was the prestige it enjoyed as the cradle of the religion and the possession of its two holy cities. But this spiritual superiority was not sufficient to ensure it an advantage in the power politics that began to operate after the death of the Caliph 'Umar; and as early as the succession of 'Alī we witness a recognition of this reality when he moved the seat of government from Ḥijāz to 'Irāq, as well as the determination of the local Quraysh to cling on to their previous prerogatives when they challenged him at the Battle of the Camel. In retrospect, it can be said that the movement of Ibn-az-Zubayr was an attempt to persist in this effort to maintain Ḥijāz in its previous position of importance, and a failure to recognise the changed realities of power which had made this impossible.

Although it has become usual for historians to regard the establishment of the Umayyad Caliphate as commencing with Mu'āwiyā I, we have seen that there was little stability in the realm he left to his successors and that, in fact, it was only by superior military forces that his son Yazīd was able to coerce a semblance of unity on the various regions. When he died, this unity was shattered and the time was opportune for Ibn-az-Zubayr to assert his claim to the leadership of Islām. In this he could count on the support of 'Irāq, for by now the lines of division in the empire had resolved themselves into the two

territorial blocks: 'Irāq (with the lands to the east) and Syria (with Egypt and North Africa). In this respect, Ibn-az-Zubayr was no less a Caliph than Mu'āwiyā II and Marwān, and it is only out of regard for the conventions of later history that we speak of him as an Anti-Caliph.

It is interesting to observe that the earlier historians of Islām are in accord in describing Ibn-az-Zubayr as a true Caliph. Ibn-Sa'd (d. 130/747),¹ on the authority of al-Wāqidī, states that the bay'a was made to Ibn-az-Zubayr by the people of Mecca at the end of 64 and the beginning of 65 A.H., while al-Balādhurī (d. 219/834) is quite specific about the support he received in the various regions: 'When Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyā died the people of Ḥijāz paid homage to Ibn-az-Zubayr as Caliph, in accordance with the Book of God, the sunna and the practice of the first four Caliphs. The first who made the bay'a were 'Ubayd-Allāh b. 'Alī, his cousin 'Abd-Allāh b. Ja'far b. Abī-Ṭālib, and his half-brother Muṣ'ab. An-Nu'mān b. Bashīr, the wālī of Ḥimṣ, mentioned his name in the Friday prayers in that city.' Even Zufār b. al-Ḥārith al-Kilābī of Qinnasrīn, aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Qays in Damascus, 'Abd-Allāh b. Khāzim in Khurāsān, along with Jābir b. al-Aswad, the 'āmil of Medina, and the people of Basra and Kufa, considered Ibn-az-Zubayr to be the lawful ruler and sought the bay'a for him in the regions under their control.²

1. Tabaqāt, V, pp. 109-10.

2. Ansāb, IVB, pp. 56-59.

Aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922) records that in 64 A.H. the people of Syria paid homage to Mu'āwiyā II, while Hijāz recognised Ibn-az-Zubayr as Caliph. When Mu'āwiyā died a few weeks later, only the region of Jordan in Syria, under the government of Ḥasan b. Mālīk al-Kalbī, refused to accept Ibn-az-Zubayr as the legitimate head of Islām. In Damascus aḍ-Ḍahḥāk declared for Ibn-az-Zubayr, moved by the enmity of the Qaysites towards Kalb who were supporters of the Umayyads; and at one time even Marwān was prepared to go to Mecca to pay homage.¹ In another report, aṭ-Ṭabarī describes the division of the empire, having Hijāz and 'Irāq supporting Ibn-az-Zubayr, with 'Irāq completely loyal to him after the defeat of al-Mukhtār in 67 A.H., and Syria and Egypt declaring for 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān. However, concerning the years between 67 and 73 A.H., aṭ-Ṭabarī, while speaking of Ibn-az-Zubayr as Amīr-al-Mu'minīn, describes 'Abd-al-Malik merely as governor (ḥākim) of Syria and Egypt.²

Ad-Dīnawarī (d. 282/895)³ also calls Ibn-az-Zubayr Amīr-al-Mu'minīn and speaks of this period as his Caliphate, while al-Ya'qūbī (d. 292/904) declares, 'To the mind of Islām, he holds true authority who possesses the two Qiblas and leads the faithful in the hajj.'⁴ Al-Mas'ūdī (d. 345/956) reckons that of the twenty-one years, one month

1. Ṭabarī, V, pp. 501, 531.

2. *ibid.*, VI, p. 118.

3. Ṭiwāl, p. 281.

4. Ya'qūbī, III, p. 16.

and fifteen days of 'Abd-al-Malik's rule, the people were united for only thirteen years, three months and twenty-seven days, implying that in the first seven years, nine months and twenty-two days there was a divided leadership in Islām.¹ In the Tanbīh, he repeats this assertion:

'Abd-al-Malik succeeded his father only in Syria and Egypt, because 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr was the lawful Caliph in Hijāz, 'Irāq, Fārs, Khurāsān and what lay beyond.'²

To al-Jāhiz (d. 346/957), also, Ibn-az-Zubayr was the Caliph after Mu'āwiya II, controlling Hijāz, 'Irāq, the Yaman and Khurāsān for almost nine years.³ In his Jamhara, Ibn-Hazm (d. 456/1063) makes the interesting statement: 'Marwān b. al-Hakam revolted militarily against the Amīr-al-Mu'minīn, claiming the rule for himself. Ibn-az-Zubayr, however, was acknowledged by the Muslims as the Caliph to whom they paid homage. Marwān, therefore, had no legitimacy in the nine months of his reign, nor had his son 'Abd-al-Malik as long as Ibn-az-Zubayr lived, only becoming the legal ruler after his death in 73 A.H.' In other places, too, where he mentions Ibn-az-Zubayr, he is given the title Amīr-al-Mu'minīn.⁴

1. Murūj, V, p. 210.

2. Tanbīh, pp. 266-70.

3. Bayān, II, pp. 65-71.

4. Jamhara, pp. 87, 122; Naqt, p. 144.

Al-Kutubī (d. 764/1362), referring to 'Abd-al-Malik's succession to the sovereignty after Marwān, says that this took place 'during the Caliphate of Ibn-az-Zubayr' and that he ruled only Syria and Egypt. For seven years the rest of the Islāmic world was ruled by Ibn-az-Zubayr, and it was only when he died in 73 A.H. that 'Abd-al-Malik became the sole Caliph, this year being known as 'ām al-jamā'a, 'the year of unity'.¹

Even a Shī'ite author such as Ibn-Abī-l-Ḥadīd (7th/13th century) transmits reports to this same effect: one from Abū-Ma'shar that 'the people paid homage to Ibn-az-Zubayr in the year 64 A.H.', and the other from al-Madā'inī that, after the death of Yazīd, Ibn-az-Zubayr sought the Caliphate for himself and was acknowledged by the people of Ḥijāz, 'Irāq, the Yaman and Khurāsān. For eight years he was the leader of the hajj, and was finally killed during the reign (ḥukm) of 'Abd-al-Malik.² In another section of the same work we read: 'When al-Mahdī b. al-Manṣūr, the third 'Abbāsīd Caliph, came to power, he wanted to change the veil of the Ka'ba for a more valuable one in brocade. He noticed that on the old veil there was the inscription 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr, Amīr-al-Mu'minīn'.³

1. Fawāt, II, p. 31.
2. Sharḥ, pp. 480-83.
3. *ibid.*

Ibn-Kuthayyir (d. 774/1372), too, accepts Ibn-az-Zubayr as the rightful Caliph until his death at the hands of al-Ḥajjāj. He held the city of Mecca as his capital and rebuilt the Ka'ba according to the plan of Abraham, and it was only when he was removed from the scene that 'Abd-al-Malik received the bay'a from the people of this city.¹ Later generations of scholars shared this view. Ibn-Taghrī-Birdī (d. 874/1469), for instance, declares: 'At the beginning of the Caliphate of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam and until the death of 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr during the Caliphate of 'Abd-al-Malik, the Muslim community was divided into two camps, each supporting a separate Caliph. 'Abd-Allāh b. az-Zubayr was in control of the two Ḥarams, 'Irāq, and what lay beyond. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam succeeded in establishing the Marwānid branch of Banū Umayya after the death of Mu'āwiya b. Yazīd who was from the Sufyānī branch. Marwān and his son controlled only Syria and Egypt, the rest of the Muslim provinces being under the control of Ibn-az-Zubayr who was the lawful authority, acknowledged by the Islāmic community. The year 73 A.H., when Ibn-az-Zubayr met his death, was known as 'ām al-jamā'a because the people were now under the control of one authority, 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān.'²

1. Bidāya, VIII, pp. 332-40.

2. Nujūm, I, pp. 186-90.

The Turkish historian, Munajjim-Bāshī (d. 1113/1702), following the early historians, also accepts the report that the people of Hijāz, the Yaman, 'Irāq and Khurāsān made the bay'a to Ibn-az-Zubayr, only Syria and Egypt remaining outside. It was, he believes, only Ibn-az-Zubayr's lack of generosity and his short-sightedness that prevented him from becoming the universal Caliph after the death of Mu'āwiyā II.¹

In all those respects which the jurists were later to regard as the attributes essential in a Caliph - descent in the line of Quraysh, maturity of years, conspicuous piety, and acceptability to the majority of the Muslim community - ² Ibn-az-Zubayr can be considered as having a claim equal, if not superior, to that of any of the early Umayyads. However, it illustrates the political nature which the Caliphate soon acquired that there was also another (unmentioned) condition, namely that he possess the military capability to maintain himself in office; and in this regard Ibn-az-Zubayr failed lamentably, thinking that spiritual values alone would suffice in the crude political struggles into which he was drawn. He goes down in history as a Caliph who failed to appreciate that, within his own lifetime, Islām had become something far more complex than the community founded by the Prophet and sustained for a while

1. Ṣaḥā'if, I, pp. 737-38.

2. Māwardī, Aḥkām, p. 6.

by Abū-Bakr and 'Umar. His failure is summed up in the judgment of 'Abd-al-Malik: 'Had 'Abd-Allāh really deserved to be Caliph he would have come and faced me instead of hiding in the Ḥaram.¹

1. Tabarī, VI, p. 166.

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